

ANNUAL 1988

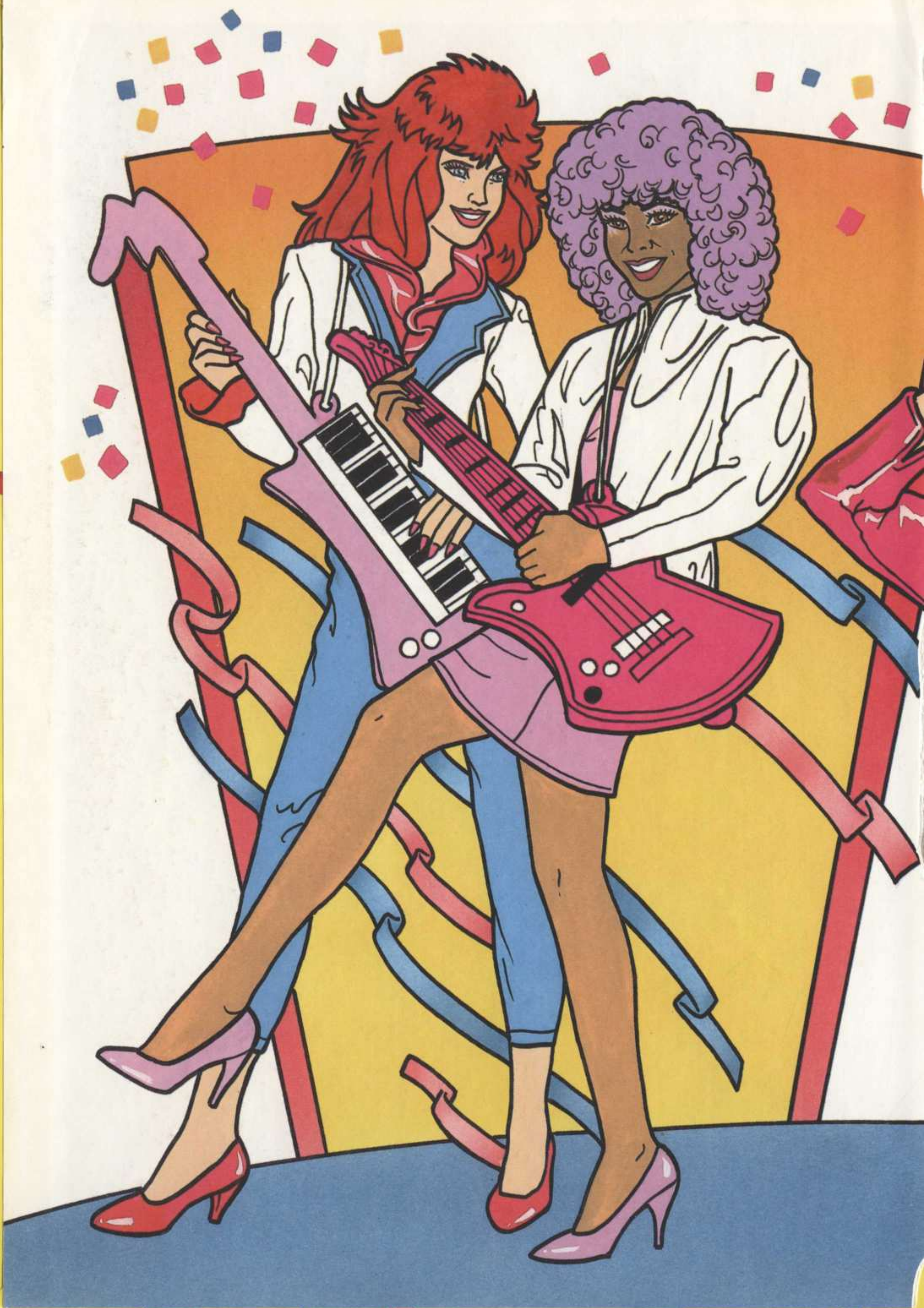


TM



Glitter n' Gold









ANNUAL 1988



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THE BEAT GOES ON

Hi!

I'm Jerrica Benton, co-executive of the Starlight Music Corporation, and this is Synergy, the world's most amazing holographic computer.

Most people know me as a career girl working hard to prevent a slimy snake named Eric Raymond from taking control of Starlight Music.

But I've got a secret that I'll share with you... as long as you promise not to tell anyone.

I touch my special earrings... ask Synergy to produce a moving 3D hologram... and I become... JEM!



JEM

As Jem I'm the outrageous pop star living and loving the fabulous fast moving world of music, fashion and fame. Meet my friends, the six great girls who form The Holograms...



AJA

The blue-haired bombshell has a head full of truly incredible musical ideas and she's a great guitar player!

KIMBER

She's not really my friend... she's my *sister*! She's the chief creative talent in the group.



SHANA

Soul-sister Shana adds her fantastic vocals to the backing. As a dancer, she's great.



RAYA

Raya, The Holograms' new drummer, is a natural on any kind of percussion instrument.



DANSE

Danse is a new member of the group. She's a great dancer and The Holograms' talented choreographer.



VIDEO

Video is queen of the screen, a lady of vision, one might say, and an ace with the camera!

And this is Rio. Unlike The Holograms, he doesn't know my secret, although he's my long-time boyfriend and he's Jem's road manager.

Poor Rio sometimes doesn't know who he likes best... Jem or me. Someday I'll tell him the truth, but not yet.

So don't go telling him, will you!



HIGHER AND HIGHER!

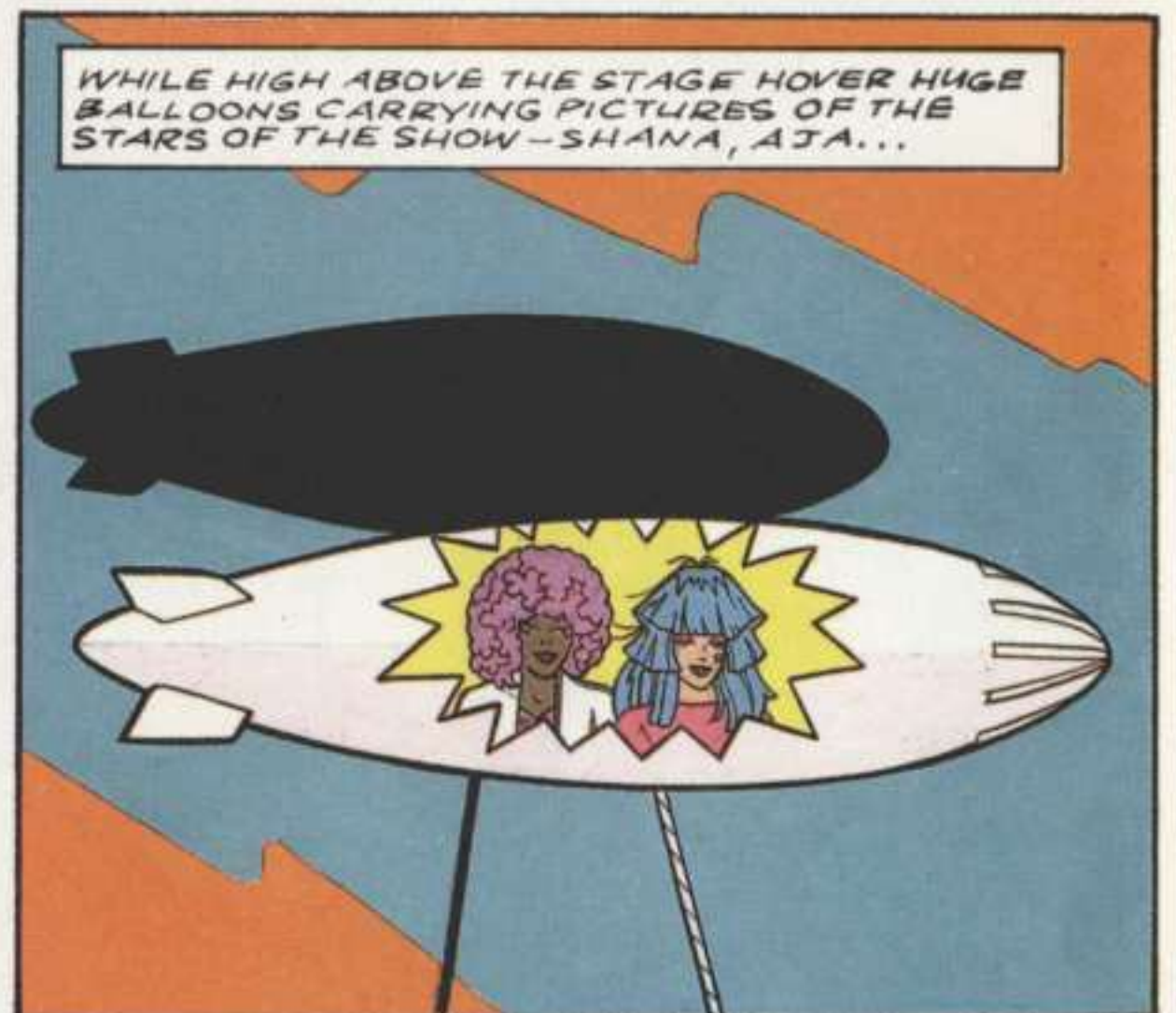
AN ENTIRE CITY IN CONCERT... AT THE MOST LAVISHLY STAGED CHARITY EXTRAVAGANZA EVER SEEN, FANTASTIC LASERS LIGHT THE EVENING SKY...



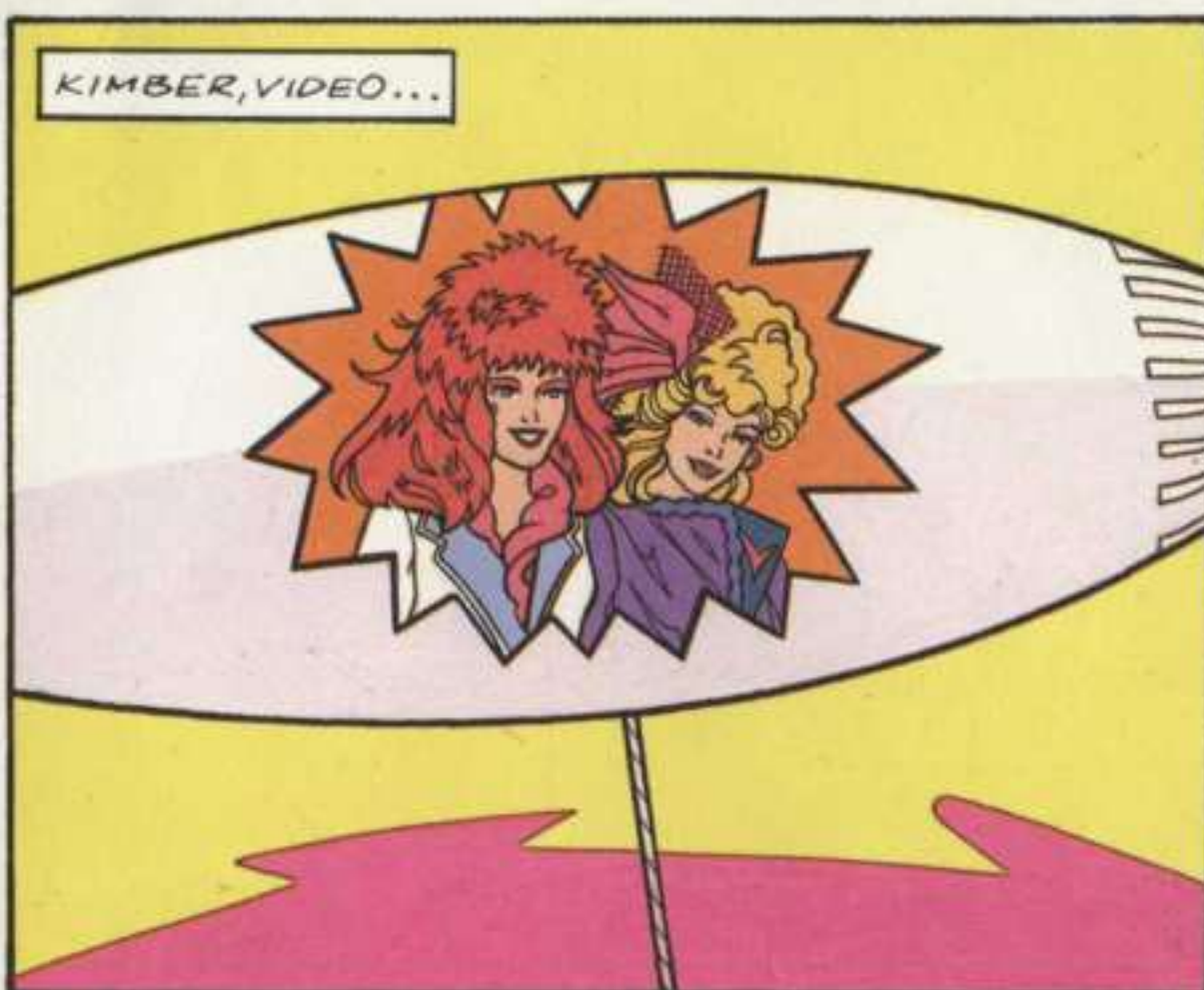
IN THE STADIUM AT THE HEART OF THE CITY, OUTRAGEOUS STUNT FLIERS MERELY WHET THE CROWD'S APPETITE FOR ACTION...



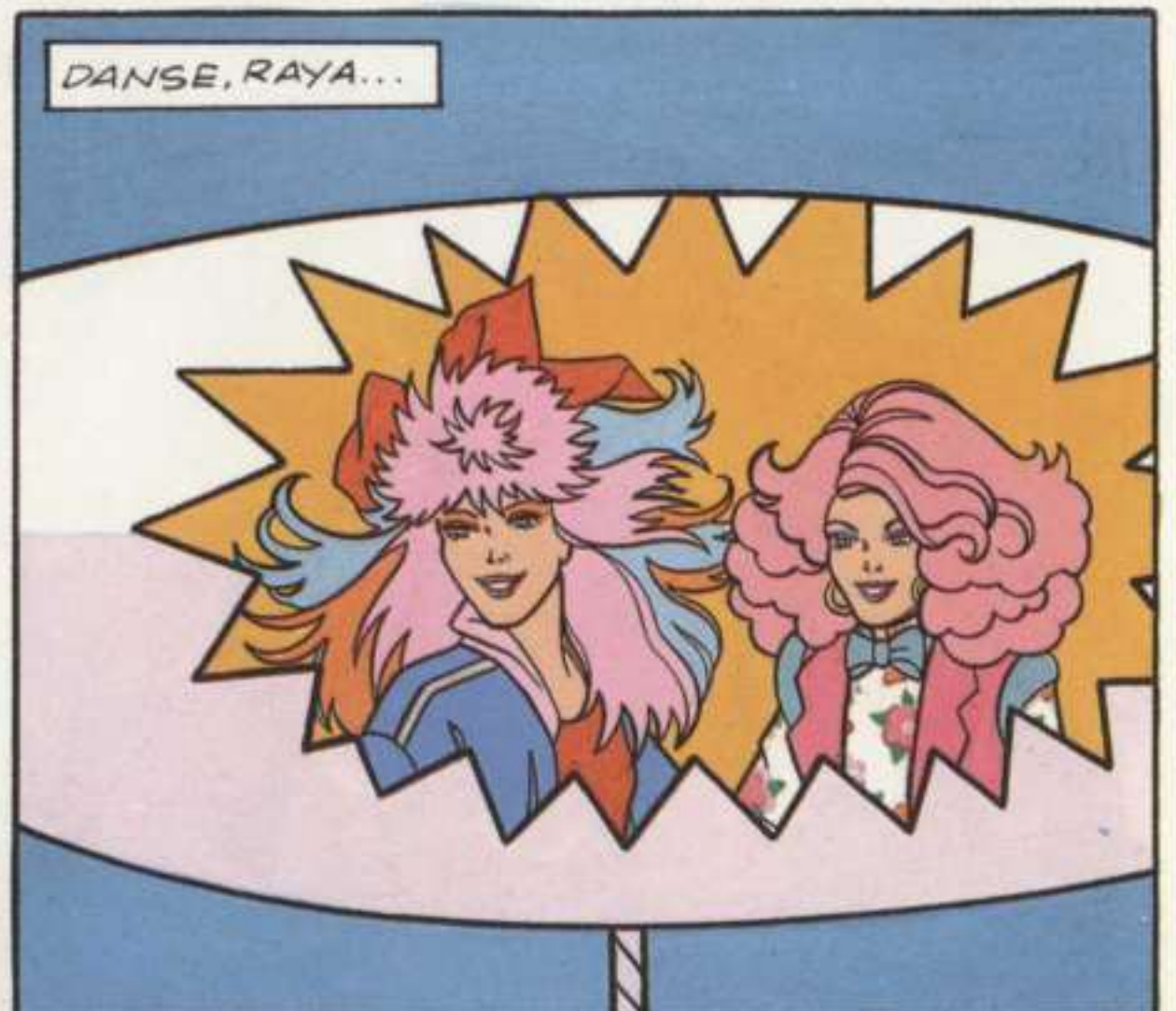
WHILE HIGH ABOVE THE STAGE HOVER HUGE BALLOONS CARRYING PICTURES OF THE STARS OF THE SHOW - SHANA, AJA...

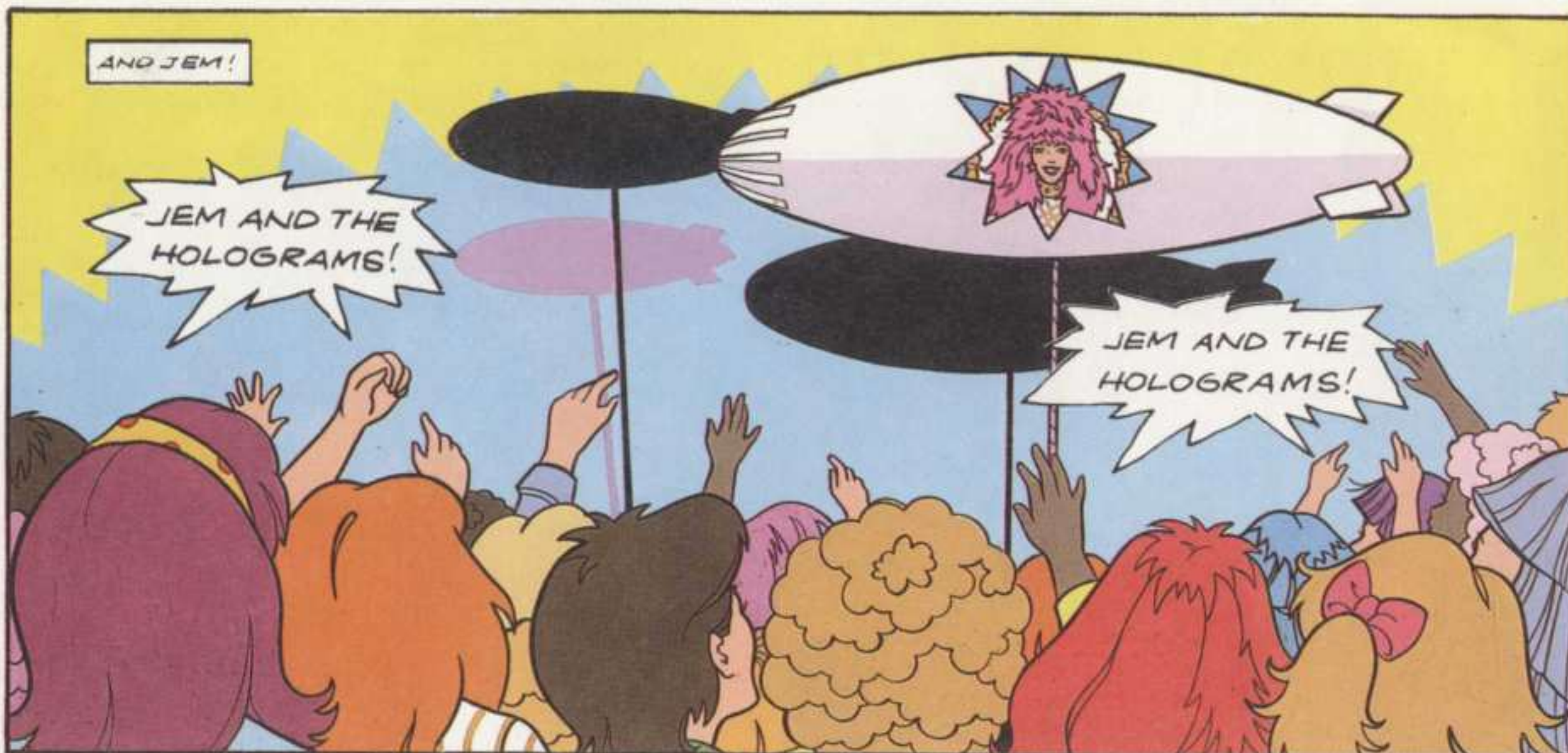


KIMBER, VIDEO...



DANSE, RAYA...







JERRICA
I... OH, JEM
IT'S YOU.
I THOUGHT
I SAW...

JERRICA
HAD TO DASH.
CAN I HELP
YOU, RIO?

NEXT SECOND...



NO, I WAS
KINDA HOPING
TO SEE
JERRICA.

WE USED
TO BE SO CLOSE
BUT NOW THAT
THE GROUP'S
TAKEN OFF, SHE
NEVER FINDS
TIME FOR
ME.



THE HOLOGRAMS MAKE
A TIMELY ENTRANCE...

OH, RIO, RIO, MAYBE IT'S
TIME I TOLD YOU
SOMETHING.
MAYBE...

THERE
YOU ARE, JEM.
JERRICA SAYS
IT'S TIME TO
GO ON.



EVERYTHING
WILL TURN OUT
RIGHT, RIO.
I KNOW IT
WILL.

I WISH
I COULD BE
SO SURE,
JEM.

HURRY
JEM—THE
CROWD'S
WAITING!



AND...

YAAAAAAY!

OKAY,
GIRLS, LET'S
GIVE THEM
THE MAX!













A message from Mr Raymond...

Hello there, readers

My name's Eric Raymond, and I'd like to say sincerely how pleased I am to have this opportunity to communicate with you, and maybe to straighten one or two things out.

Some of you may have been led into thinking that I have something against Jerrica Benton AND Jem and The Holograms, that I'm trying to ruin their career in favour of my own group The Misfits, and thereby take over Starlight Music.

Let me say once and for all, nothing could be further from the truth, and as anyone in the music business will tell you, lying is not my style. Far from it...believe me!

In fact, the only time I ever bend the truth a little is when I try and speak well of Jerrica Benton, because that girl is so confused and upset that she doesn't know how badly her wild allegations and unruly behaviour are affecting her late father's company.

Taking up with that talentless gaggle of groaners Jem and The Holograms has completely flipped the poor child's mind, changing her from an innocent youngster into the scheming powercrazed maniac we see today.

If only she could learn by the example of my own sweet girls...You can meet them on the next page...

...The Misfits - Pizzazz, Clash, Roxy and Stormer. Have you ever seen a gentler, more peace-loving set of young ladies? And they're not just beautiful, believe me. The Misfits have real musical talent. They're a group for today, who understand young people and give them the music that they want, instead of trying to cover up their lack of talent with fancy stage shows like Jem and The Holograms. These shy, sweet-natured musicians live only for their music and the pleasure it brings to their millions of adoring, law-abiding fans.

Anyway, I must go now, so this is your good friend Eric Raymond, signing off with some advice that stuck-up Jerrica Benton would do well to remember! You can fool SOME of the people ALL of the time, ALL of the people SOME of the time, but you can't fool ALL of the people ALL of the time.

Have a nice day!

Eric Raymond



PIZZAZZ



CLASH

STORMER



ROXY





NIGHT OF THE DOLPHINS

In Eric Raymond's office, while Pizzazz, Roxy, and Stormer played cards, Clash complained bitterly to the record company boss.

"Everywhere we go, all we hear is 'Jem, Jem, Jem'," she snarled. "She's getting more airplay, more screentime, more -" Behind her, Stormer suddenly shrieked with indignant anger.

"That's not fair, Pizzazz," she wailed. "You said you'd got three aces but you've only got two."

"Can it, blue-hair," smiled Pizzazz, taking a long swig from Stormer's soft drink. "I'm the third ace. Ain't that right, Eric?"

"If you say so, Pizzazz. But you've got to admit Jem and The Holograms haven't disappeared quite as quickly as we hoped. I heard talk the other day that they were going to be asked to put their footprints in wet cement outside Grauman's Chinese Restaurant."

"They'll get their feeble faces in wet cement if they try," jeered Pizzazz. "Those simpering



saying we don't advertise right? Who sprayed MISFITS in fifty-foot letters on the face of the sea cliffs? I did, that's who. That's class, buster."

"Perhaps so, Clash. But you did it when the tide was out and the first high water wiped half of it away," Eric reminded her.

"That's the cheap paint you gave us, Scroogeman. We're used to working with the best and you just ain't coming up with the proverbials. Pizzazz is right. We're artists."

"I'm sure you will be when I've finished moulding you," said Eric, "but what about the time you were hired to do the music for that dog food commercial, and the poor beast howled all the way through?"

"The dumb mutt was trying to applaud, that's all," pointed out Pizzazz. "And that food was no good. Ask the director. I made him eat a whole tin."

saps are too lightweight to make any impression. I'm different and you'd better believe it!"

"Oh, yes, you're different all right," said Eric. "And so are some of the crazy schemes that you and the girls have dreamt up. Look what happened when I let you run your own advertising campaign."

Clash, Roxy and Stormer joined in the conversation.

"Our advertising?" snapped Clash. "You



"Okay, girls. Playtime's over now. Just you run along and leave all the thinking to your kind old Uncle Eric." The scheming record executive became brisk and businesslike as he propelled the girls towards the door. "I've got an idea that will bring Jem and The Holograms down from cloud nine. In fact it will leave them with a *sinking* feeling..." Eric smiled a sneaky, sickly smile. "So don't you worry your pretty little heads about a thing. All right?"

"All right!" chorused Clash, Roxy and Stormer as they followed Pizzazz out. When the door slammed shut Eric Raymond reached

for the phone. After a couple of rings a familiar voice answered.

"Ah, Zipper," said Eric Raymond, smoothly. "I was wondering. How good a swimmer are you?"

Zipper laughed cruelly. "My daddy was an electric eel and mommy was a great white."

"Excellent. There's something I'd like you to do for me. I don't want anyone harmed, but here's my plan..."



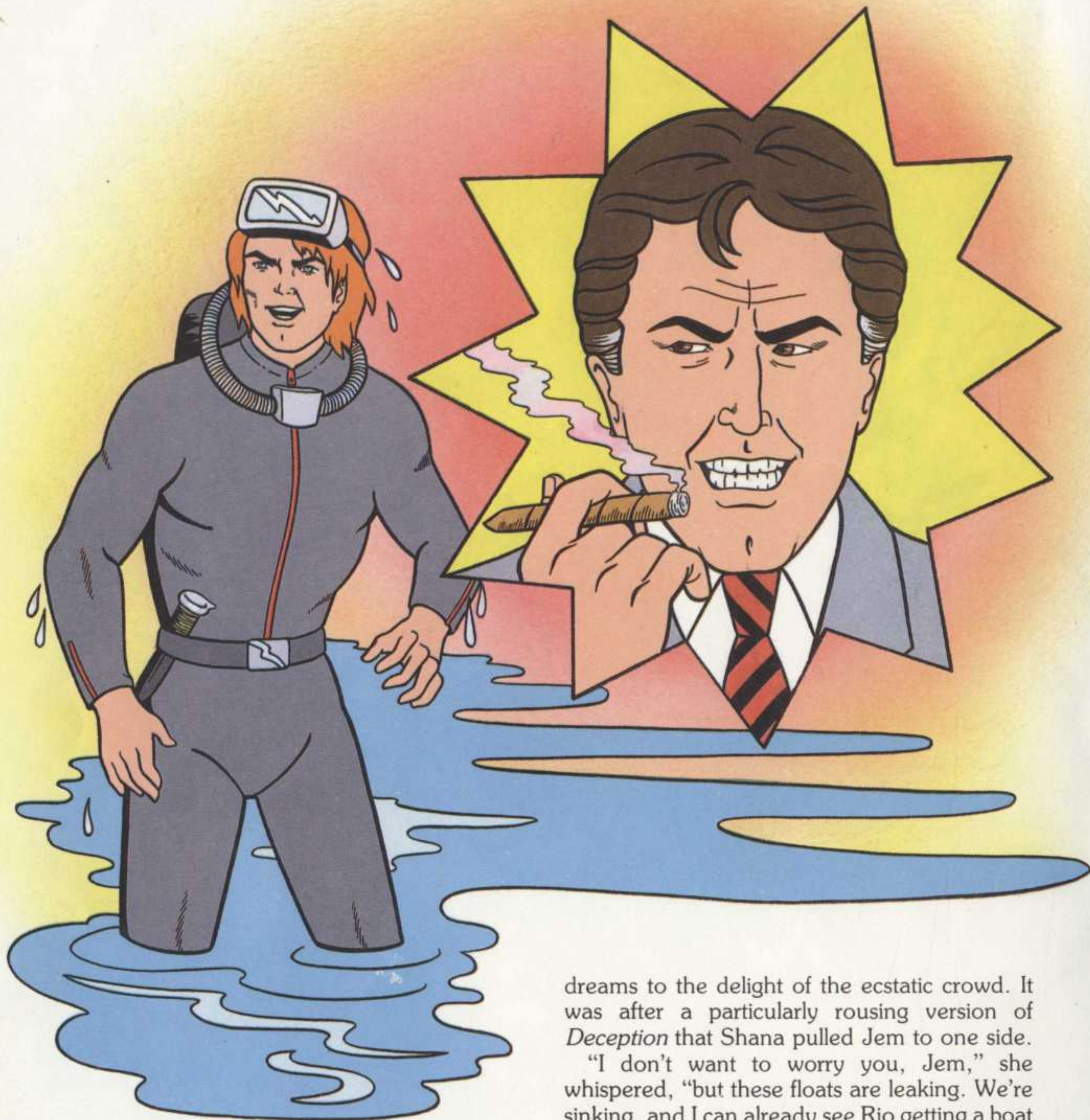


That evening, at the fantastic Sea Blaze Marina, a vast natural amphitheatre flanked by shops and restaurants, a massive crowd of breathlessly excited fans watched with mounting expectation as lasers and strobes played on the glittering mirrored dome that floated silently in the middle of the bay. Then suddenly the lights went out, a single power chord sounded, and a deep resonant voice echoed through the night: "Ladies and gentlemen...JEM AND THE HOLOGRAMS!"

It was absolute pandemonium as the mirrored dome slowly dropped, the lights came flashing on and The Holograms launched into *In The Beginning*, with Jem singing the famous words with heartfelt meaning and passion. The revolutionary sound system carried the

magnificent music far into the night as the thousands and thousands of happy fans roared their approval. The stage itself, a glittering creation on four massive floats, slowly rotated round and round, showcasing the sensational seven to their adoring followers.

But while the good-natured partying got into full swing above the water, the menacing figure of Zipper, clad in a wetsuit and wearing a mask, was quietly emerging from the deep by a small waterfront café outside the marina. He took off his mask and his air tank, then went inside the café and made a call. Eric Raymond answered.



"Ah, Zipper. How did it go?"

"Like clockwork. Every one of those tanks is now leaking. In twenty minutes those gals will be leaving the stage in lifeboats."

Eric Raymond smiled grimly. "Thank you, Zipper. This I've got to see. I'll be in touch."

"Any time."

But while Eric Raymond and the seedy crook were plotting their villainy, Jem and The Holograms were rocking it out with some of the best music they had ever played, dancing like

dreams to the delight of the ecstatic crowd. It was after a particularly rousing version of *Deception* that Shana pulled Jem to one side.

"I don't want to worry you, Jem," she whispered, "but these floats are leaking. We're sinking, and I can already see Rio getting a boat ready to pick us up."

Jem looked across the bay. Shana was right. Rio was untying a boat in a corner of the marina. The crowd hushed, somehow sensing there was something wrong, and watched in respectful silence as Jem and The Holograms held a quick conference. At the end of it, Jem spoke into her special stage-to-shore radio.

"Don't worry, Rio. We're in control. This is one show that's going on."

"Don't be crazy, Jem, you're sinking!" replied Rio.

By now, the crowd realised exactly what was happening and a worried murmur spread through the once-blissful ranks.

"The stage is sinking!" one girl cried. "Get off, Jem! Now!"

Jem strode purposefully to the microphone.

"You guys came here to celebrate the opening of this fabulous marina, right?" she asked. A few calls of "Right!" and "Right on!" drifted back from the crowd. Jem held her arms up high.

"Me and The Holograms here did, too," she continued, and the crowd began to warm to her amazing courage. "We reckon we've got a couple of songs left before our feet start getting wet, so the question is... do you want to hear them?"

The crowd roared and stamped their feet.

"I can't hear you!" Jem went on, smiling and waving her arms. "I asked you if you wanted to hear them?"

And in the explosion of whistling, clapping, shouting and stamping that followed, Jem went to a quiet corner of the stage and gently touched her wondrously powered earrings.

"We've got trouble, Synergy," she whispered. "But we think we can manage to get out of it with your help. We want you to key a dolphin's distress call into the synthesizer and keep it going through the next two numbers."

And, while Jem and The Holograms stormed through their last two songs, and the stage sank closer and closer to the water, a computerised replica of a dolphin's distress call sounded out across the darkness of the waves.



But, even as the music thundered and the crowds went wild, Rio was getting very nervous indeed. The water was almost lapping the stage now, and Jem and The Holograms were in danger.

"It's no good," he muttered under his breath as he prepared to start the motor. "I'm going to have to stop the show and save them."

Before the motor powered into life, however, Rio was met by an amazing sight. A whole school of dolphins had entered the marina and were now leaping and frolicking round the stage. The last song ended, Jem and The Holograms took a bow, and while the astonished crowd shrieked their approval, they each climbed onto the back of a different dolphin. Then the seven superstar friends rode

round and round the marina, with the rest of the dolphins relishing the spotlight and applause, leaping and soaring playfully as the fans roared and roared and roared.

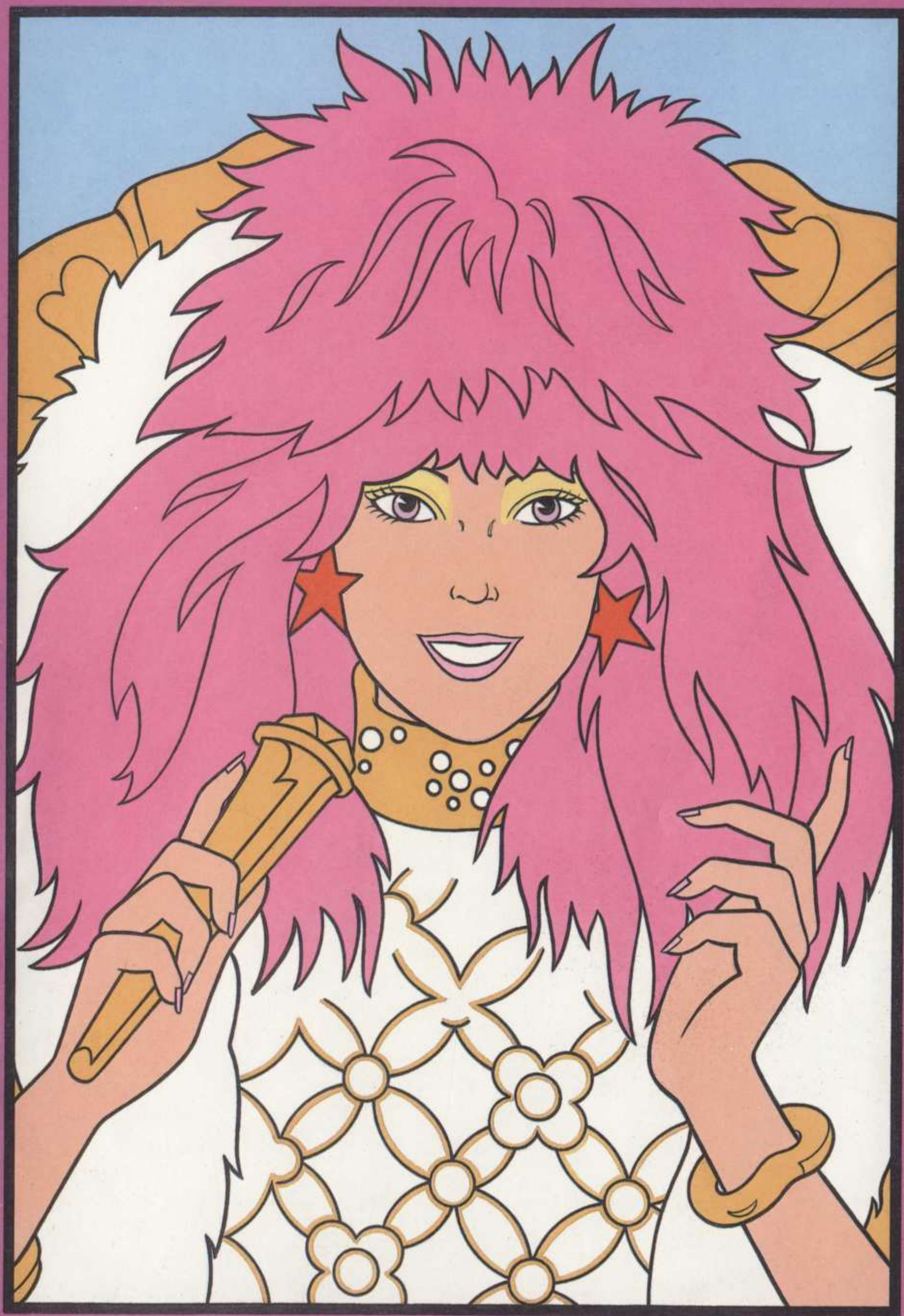
"What's going on?" asked a puzzled, but delighted, Rio as Jem and a dolphin raced towards him.

"Kimber reckons that some of the notes on the keyboards must have pitched into the dolphins' wavelength," laughed Jem. "They're friendly, intelligent creatures and I guess they wanted to join the fun."

"That must be it," agreed Rio. "I can't think of any other explanation. Can you?"

But Jem and the dolphin had already leapt away back to the spotlights and the cheering fans.





Queen For a Day

In the kitchen of Starlight House, Jacqueline Houghton, a pretty young blonde who refused to answer to any name other than plain old Jack, paused mid-way through drying the last of the breakfast dishes and turned to Dizzy, her best friend.

"You know the Jem and The Holograms look-alike competition tonight?" she began, placing the last plate on the top of a large pile. "I've been thinking. Why don't we ask Jerrica to play Jem?"

"No way!" Dizzy laughed. "Jerrica could never be as truly outrageous as Jem."

"I don't know," said Jack thoughtfully, "I could be Shana, you could be Kimber, Mary could be Aja, and I thought Janet, Clare and Sue could be Video, Danse and Raya. But we haven't really got anyone who could be Jem."

"Nobody's got anyone who could be Jem," smiled Dizzy, emptying the dirty water from the bowl. "I know Jerrica's pretty, but only Jem can really be Jem."





"Maybe," countered Jack, wiping her hands on a towel. "But if Jerrica could pull it off I think we could have a real chance of actually winning. We've been working on the outfits for weeks now."

"Don't remind me," sighed Dizzy, "and I still can't get my jacket to look the way Kimber's does on her."

At that moment, the kitchen door opened and Rio walked in, carrying an empty coffee cup.

"Still no sign of Jerrica?" he asked, rinsing the cup under the tap. Dizzy and Jack exchanged secret smiles.

"I think she's off somewhere seeing Jem about something," Dizzy said quietly, as Rio swung a chair round and sat down with his arms folded.

"As usual," he sighed.

"Don't be so glum, chum," Jack teased. "Now Jem and The Holograms are doing so

well, it's only natural that Jerrica should be away more often."

"I guess you're right," he agreed. "Jerrica and Jem are always running about somewhere or other."

"That Jem is one mysterious lady," observed Dizzy. "Do you think she and Jerrica look alike?"

"I've never really thought about it," Rio mused. "Jerrica's very bright and pretty but Jem..." He paused briefly, and a strange look clouded his eyes.

"There's something about her, but...nobody seems to be able to get to know her."

"Would you like to get to know her, Rio?"

"I'm not sure. When I'm with her she's kind and gentle, but..."

"But what, Rio?"

"I don't know, I just don't know."

Jack folded up the towel and put it in a drawer.



"Do you think if we asked Jerrica to play Jem in the Jem and The Holograms competition we've entered, she'd agree?" asked Jack, as the door swung open and Jerrica Benton herself walked in carrying a bag full of groceries.

"Why don't you ask her," smiled Jerrica, as Jack and Dizzy blushed furiously. The two friends looked from Rio to Jerrica and back at each other.

"Well?" Jerrica prompted.

"Jack thought we should ask you to play Jem in the Jem and The Holograms look-alike competition," Dizzy blurted out.

Jerrica smiled. "Haven't Jem and The Holograms themselves already agreed to judge the competition and put on a show of their own afterwards?" she asked.

"Why should that matter?" queried Rio.

Jerrica caught his glance and for a second she felt flooded with a desire to tell him the truth, to let him know that Jem and Jerrica Benton were the same girl. "It wouldn't really be fair to the others," she said, forcing a smile. "After all, Jem's a friend of mine. We work together. If I were to win, I'm sure Eric Raymond would find some way to make it look like it was rigged."

The girls looked dejected and Rio's puzzled look dissolved into a smile.

Then Jack clapped her hands together and grinned. "Well that's that, then!" she sparkled. "I guess we'll just have to think of something else!"

"Are we still going to finish the Jem outfit?" asked Dizzy.

"You bet!" Jack confirmed. "And if we can't get someone to try and be Jem, we'll stick it on a mop instead!"

"You do that," urged Jerrica. "You'd probably win!"

Meanwhile, in Eric Raymond's office, Pizzazz, Clash, Stormer and Roxy were making the final plans for their next appearance.

"We set up our own stage right outside the place they're holding their stupid look-alike competition," Eric Raymond declared. "That way, we draw such a big crowd that nobody will be able to get in the theatre!"

"You got it," Pizzazz agreed uncertainly.

"Check it out, sister!" Roxy affirmed, clicking her fingers to some imaginary beat. "When The Misfits make trouble we make it with a capital T."

"Too true!" crowed Clash.

That afternoon, after Jerrica and Rio had been down to the theatre to check out that no last minute hitches had come up, they were startled to see Pizzazz, Clash, Stormer and Roxy setting

up their instruments on the pavement. Already a small crowd had gathered and when Pizzazz saw Jerrica she leered over the microphone at her.

"Hey, noodle-neck!" she taunted. "How do you like our new time-share arrangement? We'll pull such a crowd that nobody will bother to go see your crummy set-up! Neat, huh? I do so enjoy these polite conversations of ours, don't you? And while we're getting on so well, how about lending me your pet poodle there? I can tell from the looks he keeps giving me that he'd rather work for me!"

Rio ushered Jerrica to the Rockin' Roadster before slamming the door closed and driving off. Jerrica studied his anxious face, as he weaved expertly through the traffic.

"You don't really like Pizzazz, do you, Rio?" she asked quietly.



"How could you even think it?" Rio replied, slowing down and pulling to the kerb. "That girl is an absolute disgrace."

"But...but..." Jerrica was suddenly confused when she realised why Rio had pulled up. She'd been selfishly questioning him about things she already knew the answer to, and she'd been too busy to notice the little girl crying by the mailbox. Rio, as alert and caring as ever, had spotted her straight away, and was already kneeling by her side trying to comfort her.

"What's the matter?" he asked kindly.

"My mom sent me out to post this," she said, holding up a letter.

"Why should you cry about posting a letter?" Rio enquired casually. The girl stamped her foot and gritted her teeth.

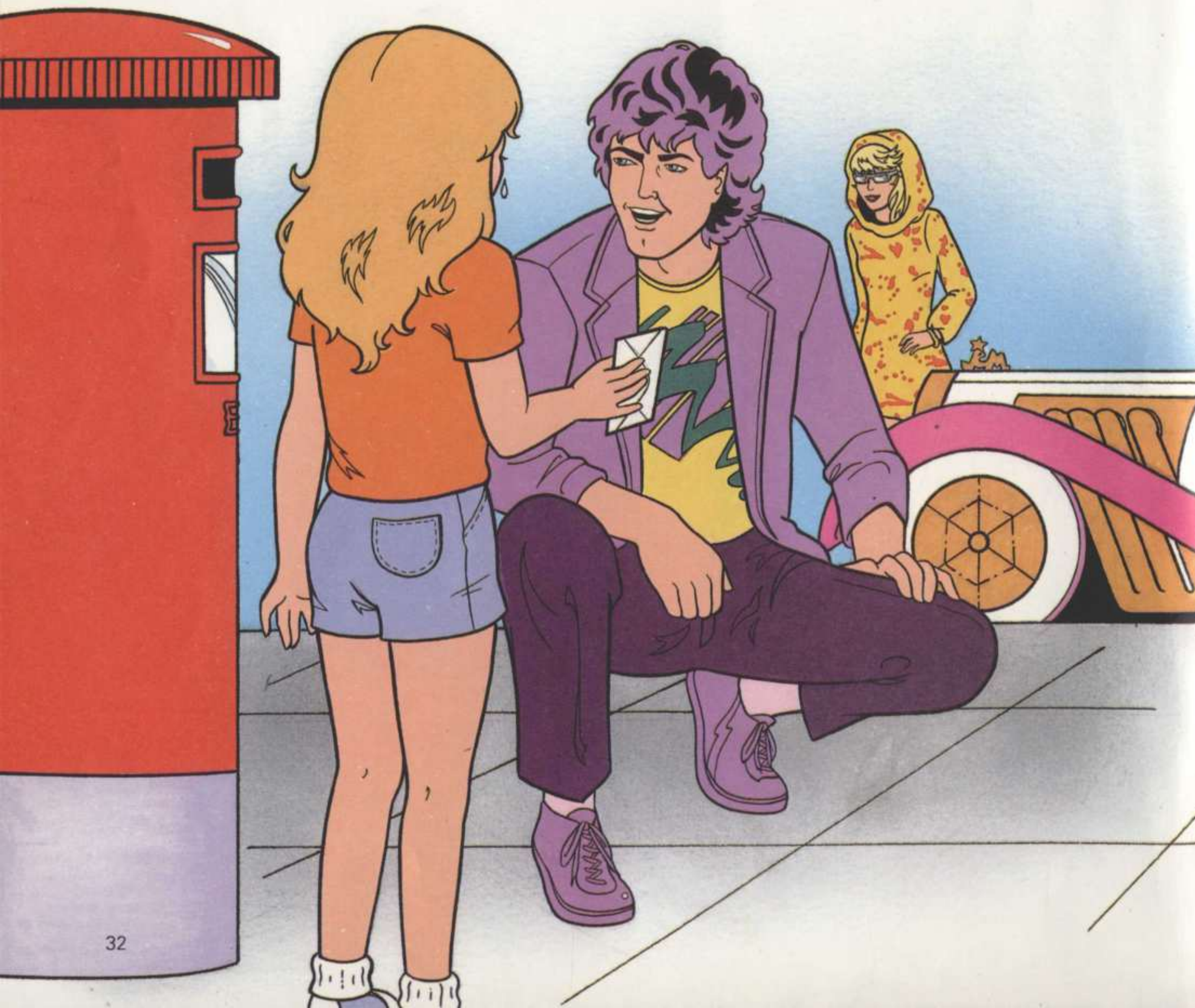
"I had a ticket to go see the Jem and The Holograms look-alike competition," she said. "I was so excited about it that when Mom sent me to post the letter, I posted the ticket instead! I could cry for days!"

"Don't let us hear any more of that kind of foolish talk," Jerrica said, as she walked over from the Rockin' Rockster. "Let's go and see your mom and talk. I think I know a way to get you into the theatre."

"Have you really got a plan?" asked Rio, as they walked the girl home. Jerrica could tell from the warmth in his voice that he was impressed.

"I think so," she replied, in a matter-of-fact voice. Rio grinned and shook his head from side to side.

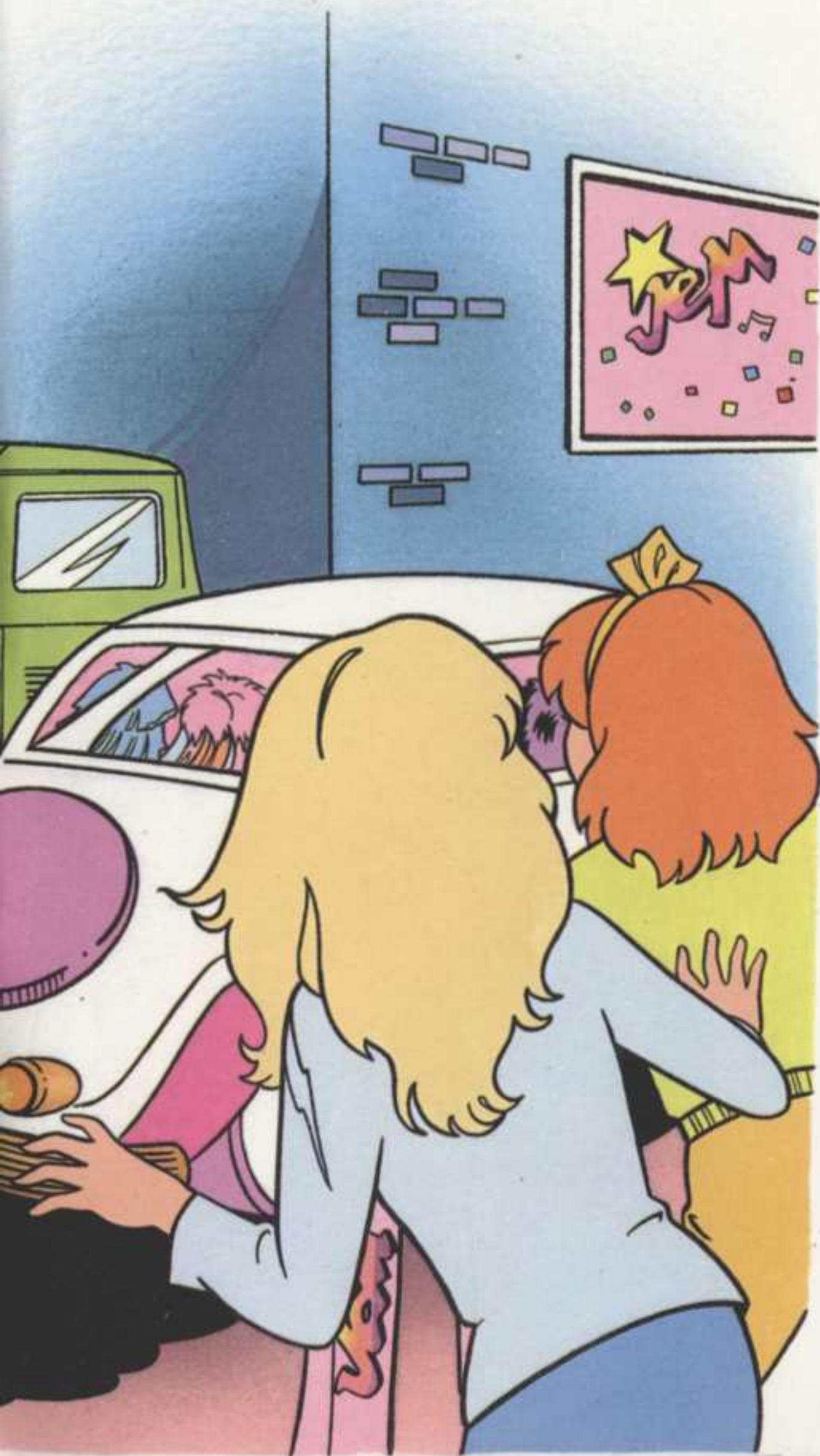
"Jerrica — you're beautiful!"



That night as the time for the start of the concert approached, Jack, Dizzy, Mary and their other friends donned their home-made Holograms outfits, while the little girl – whose name was Alana – tentatively tried on the Jem clothes they had made.

“How do I look?” she asked anxiously, after finally fitting the red cardboard earrings. Jerrica, Rio and The Holograms surveyed the seven look-alikes with mock frowns.

“I think...” said Shana gravely, trying to shake her head, but unable to keep her dazzling smile from shining through, “I think that Jem and us guys had better watch out! Girls...you look simply sensational!”



When they'd all stopped laughing, it was time to put Jerrica's plan into action. Rio took the seven look-alikes in the Rockin' Roadster, while Jem and The Holograms followed in the van. When Rio arrived at the theatre, he drove past the crowd and then round the back to the stage entrance. The crowd went wild, surging after them, and shouting for Jem and The Holograms. The outraged Misfits stormed off, Jem and The Holograms entered by the main doors, and the competition started bang on time. After their performance outside the theatre, Alana, Jack, Dizzy and the four other look-alikes just had to win the competition, and, to cap it all, they were invited on stage with Jem and The Holograms to help sing along in the encore!

All in all, it was generally agreed, that a truly outrageous evening was had by everyone involved!

SHE'S A NATURAL

When the girls at Starlight House asked Jerrica Benton to ask Jem how she keeps looking so fresh and beautiful, Jerrica told them it needn't cost a lot of money to keep your hair and face in shape, especially if you make use of ordinary everyday items provided by Mother Nature herself. Here are some of Jerrica's tips, but if you want to follow them, remember to ALWAYS rinse thoroughly with water after trying them out.

The humble potato probably doesn't figure very highly on the list of fashion tips of the top models, but in fact the potato has good cleansing and drawing properties and, if the flesh is rubbed on the skin once a day, can help remove blemishes.

Milk is another commonplace item with surprising cleansing qualities when put onto cotton wool and wiped over the face twice a day. Cotton wool pads soaked in milk can relieve puffiness round the eyes if left on for ten minutes.

To help improve the texture of the skin, good old-fashioned oatmeal is excellent. The finely ground variety is best, mixed with a teaspoon of milk or water and used as a face wash. A spoonful in the bath helps general skin texture, and when mixed with natural yoghurt makes an effective face mask if left on for ten minutes.

Yoghurt itself (natural only) contains enzymes that act on bacteria and helps thoroughly cleanse problem skin. If the yoghurt's about, those spots had better watch out!

Lemons have always been associated with cleanliness, and a couple of slices in the bath keeps skin fresh and white. Regular use also keeps the scalp from flaking and a rub with lemon halves helps soften and bleach rough elbows and hands.



One part of vinegar to eight parts of water is a smashing skin tonic and the same mixture used as a hair wash adds shine and texture.

Mayonnaise is an effective deep conditioner for both skin and hair. The vinegar it contains fights grease, and the eggs and oil in it help to condition.

Strawberries may seem like unlikely cleansers, but they work! Smoothing three mashed strawberries over your face, then rinsing thoroughly after ten minutes, helps remove blemishes from the skin.

Honey, mixed equally with milk and rubbed on the face, is a good cleanser that leaves the skin soft and supple.

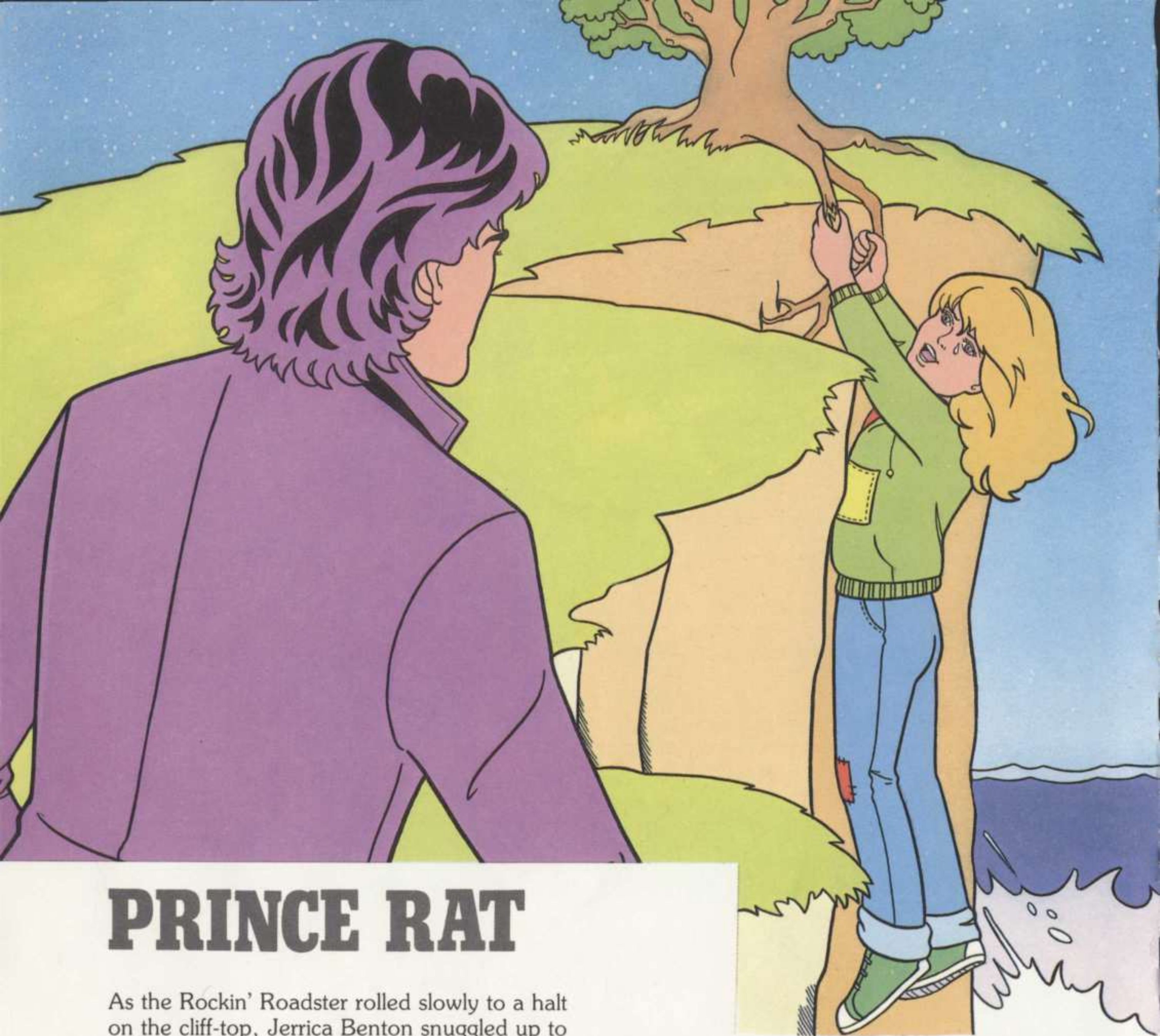
Mashed banana with two teaspoons of cream and one of sugar makes a remarkably effective face pack that gives dry or normal skin a smooth, wrinkle-free glow.

Slices of tomato rubbed over oily patches on the skin will help unblock pores if used repeatedly. The nature of the juice makes it doubly important to remember to rinse thoroughly afterwards.

The cucumber has long been known as an excellent cooling and softening agent for all kinds of skin. Tired eyes can quickly be revived by placing a slice of cucumber over each eyelid, then laying back and letting the vegetable's juices do the work!

Whatever your skin type, eggs have a way of helping. To improve greasy skin, leave a whisked egg white on your face for twenty minutes and for dry skin, mix an egg yolk with a teaspoon of honey and leave for fifteen minutes.





PRINCE RAT

As the Rockin' Roadster rolled slowly to a halt on the cliff-top, Jerrica Benton snuggled up to Rio in the front seat, closed her eyes and listened contentedly to the moonlit surf pounding out a relentless roaring beat on the jagged rocks below.

"Oh, Rio — I'm so happy," she sighed. "Jem and The Holograms are in great shape for tomorrow's concert. I can tell it's going to be a great success. Oh, by the way...did you collect the extra tickets from the printers to be sold at the door?"

"Uh-huh," nodded Rio, gazing out over the ocean.

Suddenly, a piercing scream interrupted the scene, and the manager of the world's most mysterious star vaulted over the side of the Rockin' Roadster and sprinted towards the cliff edge. Peering over the tremendous drop, he saw a young girl of around six years of age,

hanging on to a shrub with both hands and howling for all she was worth. Far below her, the white surf swirled and raged. Already the roots of the thick shrub were beginning to come free from the ground.

Rio didn't hesitate. He ripped off his jacket, dived to the ground and reached down, dangling the garment as close to the terrified girl as he could get.

"Get a hold of the jacket, honey," he said soothingly. "I'll pull you up."

The girl obeyed, and seconds later she was sobbing with relief in Rio's powerful arms while Jerrica stroked her fine golden hair.

"What's a girl like you doing out on the cliffs at night?" asked Jerrica kindly. The girl fought back the tears and snuffled loudly.



"My name's Jezebel St. Claire," she sobbed defiantly. "At least it will be when I get to Hollywood and become a star."

Rio and Jerrica exchanged smiles.

"And how come you were on the cliff, Jezebel?" Jerrica prompted.

"I was watching the birds. I lost my footing," said Jezebel, as she poked at the ground with the toe of her sneakers.

"Do your mother and father know where you are?"

Jezebel looked warily from Rio to Jerrica. When she finally spoke, she sounded very, very tired, as if some distant memory had been haunting her for too long.

"I...I...I don't have a mother or father. I ran away from the orphanage because they

accused me of stealing."

"Were you stealing?" asked Rio.

Jezebel shook her head. "No, I knew who it was though, and I wouldn't tell... so they tried to blame me."

Jerrica gently took the little girl's hand. "Loyalty is an admirable quality, Jezebel," she explained, "but so is telling the truth."

"Yeah, but squealing's different! The other girls would have gone crazy for sure. They never liked me because...because..." Jezebel fell silent and clasped the large chest pocket on her home-made clothes.

"Never mind for now, Jezebel," said Rio, leading the way back to the Rockin' Roadster. "If we hurry, we could make it back to Starlight House in time for supper."

In fact, the girls at Starlight House were already eating when Jerrica and Rio returned with Jezebel. Another new arrival called Minty Jones was carrying two large plates of jelly into the dining room when a sudden movement in Jezebel's jacket pocket made her stop suddenly. Jezebel's pocket bulged and rustled. Minty's jaw dropped open and her eyes grew wide. There was something alive in there! She felt the hairs on her neck rising, and when a furry brown head popped out and made a peculiar squeaking noise, she flung the plates in the air and jumped onto the nearest empty chair.

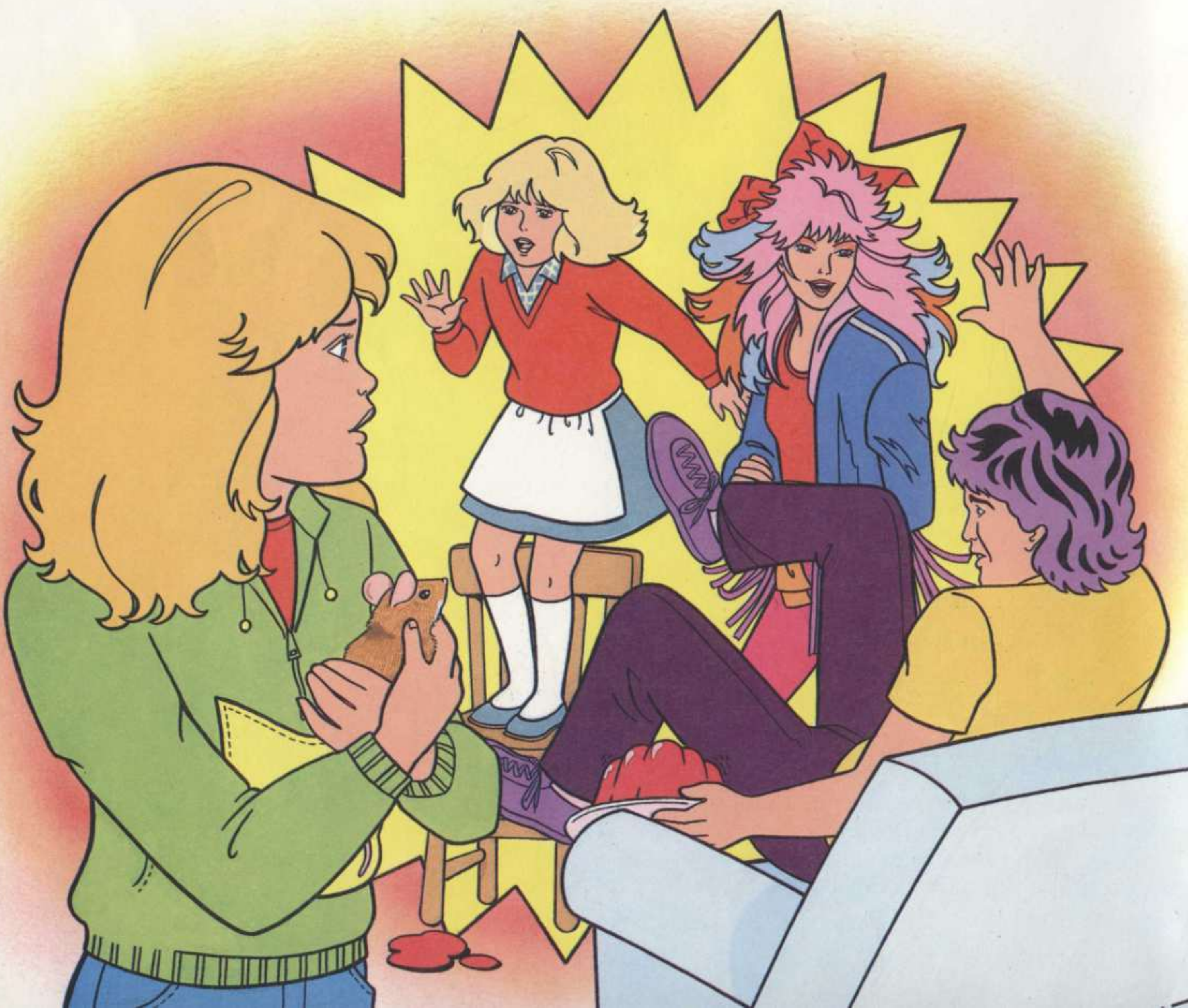
"A rat! She's got a rat in there!" Minty screamed as the jelly showered down on the girls. Rio caught one plate and was going for another when his feet slipped in a smattering of jelly and he toppled onto the couch. The rat jumped from Jezebel's shoulder onto the table

and moved slowly towards Minty, sniffing inquisitively.

Minty screamed louder and began waving her arms about, and when the rat jumped onto her chair and began hopping about in circles round her feet, she lost her balance and began falling to the floor.

Rio was up like a shot, spreading his arms to catch the tumbling girl, but even as he did so, his feet hit another patch of jelly and the two of them staggered backwards onto the couch. They somersaulted backwards, knocking over a table light, a vase, and a stack of magazines before landing in a sprawling heap among a pile of scatter cushions.

The other girls were shrieking with laughter. In the confusion, the rat disappeared, Jezebel made a bolt through the door, and when Rio retrieved his jacket from the upturned couch, he discovered that something else had





managed to go missing. He dug deep in all his pockets, then took Jerrica's arm and led her to a quiet corner of the room.

"What is it, Rio?" smiled Jerrica, as some of the smaller girls giggled and pointed at the couple.

"It's the tickets for tomorrow's show," he told Jerrica quietly, "they've gone!"

Jerrica's smile disappeared like a dying flicker of candle light.

"But...but...oh, no...Jezebel!"

Video and Kimber joined Jerrica and Rio in the search for Jezebel while the others helped the girls set about clearing up the mess. As the Rockin' Roadster nosed slowly through the night, the rain began falling lightly.

"That girl's going to get wet," observed Video, as the Rockin' Roadster's hood slid up over their heads. "Do you think she stole the tickets, Rio?"

"I don't think it's wise to accuse anyone just now," said Rio, scanning the night with his piercing blue eyes. "But, hang on...there she is!"

Jezebel ducked down an alley at the first sight of the famous car. Rio was after her in a flash, sprinting down the alley with Jerrica, Video and Kimber in tow.

At the end of the alley Jezebel jumped onto some dustbins, slithered up a wall and scrambled onto an outside fire escape.

"Be careful!" warned Rio, following her up. "This thing's rusty!"

Jezebel was half-way to the roof when finally the effort proved too much. Her head dropped forward, her shoulders slumped, and with a helpless, confused and unhappy shrug, she sat down slowly and gazed sullenly at Rio through tear-filled eyes.

Rio moved up slowly and sat by her side.

"You sure get around a lot," he began kindly. Jezebel's lower lip jutted outwards defiantly. "How come you made off so quick?"

"It's Prince Alfred," she sighed, shaking her head. "He always scares somebody or other. And he's ever so friendly really."

"Prince Alfred, huh? That's a mighty fine name for a rat."



"Not at all," laughed Rio. "I like animals. And Prince Alfred looked like a pretty fine specimen to me." He paused, then clasped Jezebel's hands between his own. "Are you ready to come back now?"

Jezebel snatched her hand away. "No!"

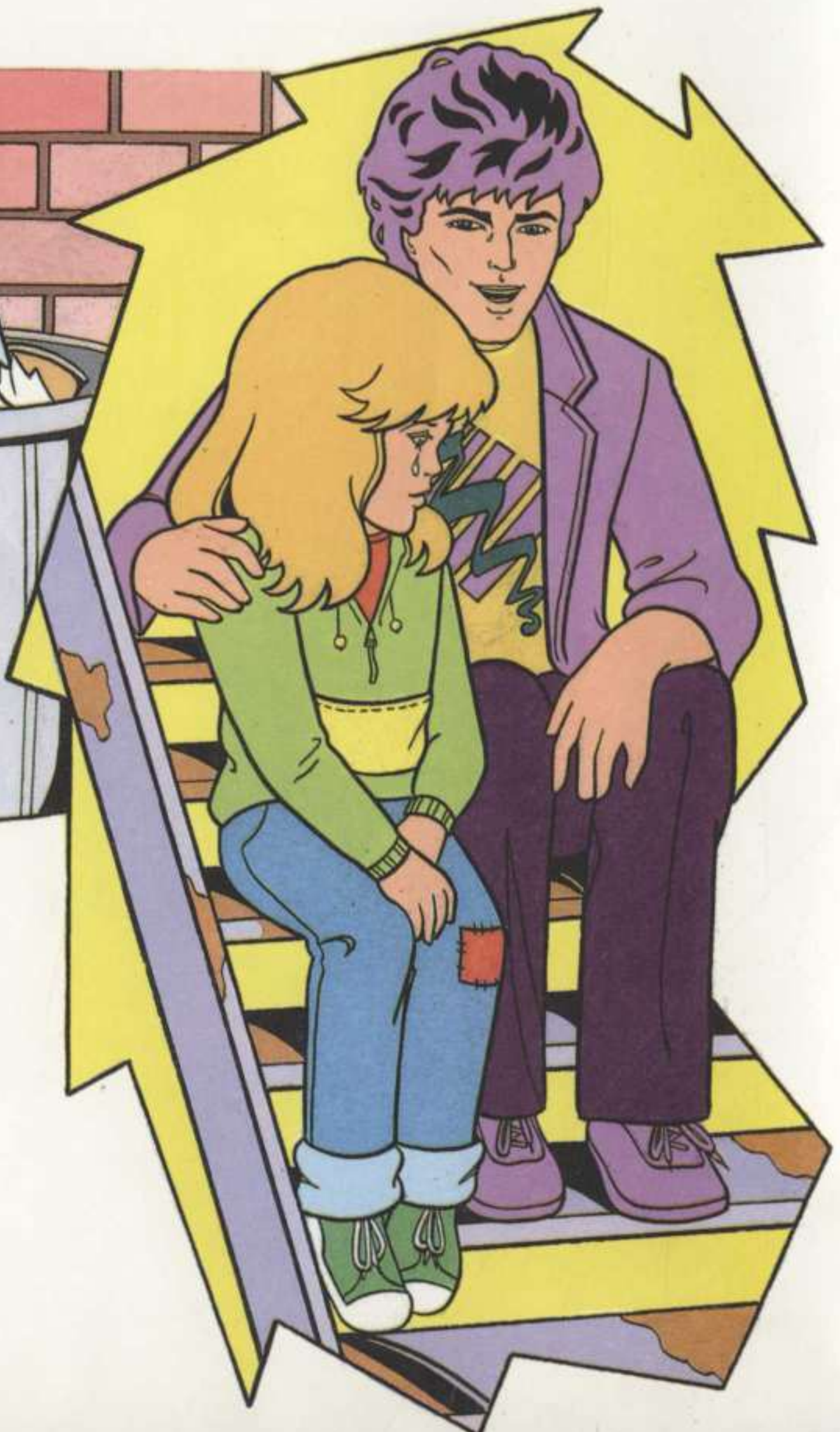
"C'mon honey, it's time to go back," soothed Jerrica.

"Why should I?" Jezebel snorted. "I'm on my way to Hollywood to become a star!"

"That may take time, Jezebel," Jerrica advised. "And surely you're not in such a hurry that you'd turn down the chance of a free ticket to see Jem and The Holograms tomorrow."

"Well..."

"And you wouldn't want Prince Alfred to think you'd run out on him, would you?" Rio



"Prince Alfred's my friend. I've had him for nearly six months. He's very clean, but he always seems to scare people. He makes them think I'm weird or something."

"Some people might think that keeping a pet rat in your pocket is a pretty unusual thing to do," Rio pointed out.

Jezebel frowned. She watched thoughtfully as Jerrica climbed up to join them. When Jerrica sat down, Jezebel turned to face Rio.

"Do you think it's unusual?" Her voice was suspicious, challenging.

chipped in. "C'mon, Jezebel, it's the best thing to do."

Jezebel stared at the rusty steps until her eyes began to clear. Finally she stood up and put her hands in the pockets of her thin coat, and said, "I guess so."

Back at Starlight House, most of the mess had been dealt with. There was still no sign of Prince Alfred, however, until a faint but persistent scratching sound started coming from inside the couch, and the quick removal of a cushion revealed Jezebel's pet rat chewing greedily at a wad of Jem and The Holograms tickets.

"Well I'll be," said Rio, as Jezebel picked up Prince Alfred and began to stroke him. "The tickets must have fallen out when I was trying to

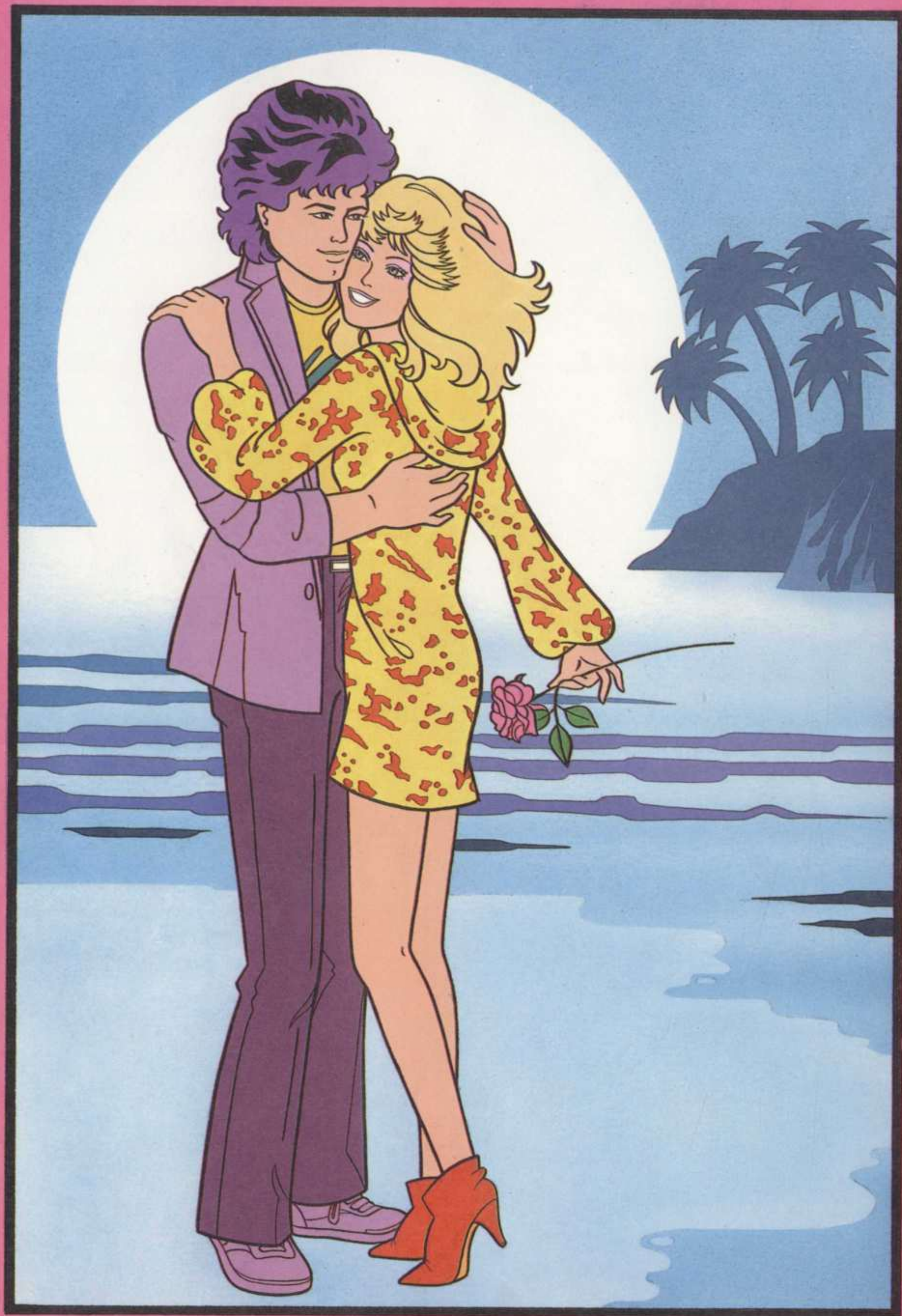
stop Minty from falling!"

"Yes," Jezebel confirmed proudly, "and it took my smart friend here to find them."

The following day, with Jezebel settling in nicely and Minty and Prince Alfred getting on like a house on fire, Jerrica Benton kissed Rio briefly on the lips as The Holograms took to the stage at a massive charity event. Then she ducked into her dressing room, fingered her fantastic earrings and whispered, "It's show time, Synergy."

Then the sophisticated young businesswoman finally forgot the trials and tribulations of the past few days, as she transformed once more into the magically mysterious, shimmering, scintillating...Jem. Truly outrageous!





Playing with Fire



The words in Jerrica Benton's head swirled round and round, each time getting faster and faster, wilder and more heartfelt, again and again and again... It was a single relentless refrain, getting louder and louder as it squeezed ever more tightly round her crumbling feelings of self respect: "It should have been me!"

All round her, stars of stage and screen mixed happily with fans of Jem and The Holograms, and the scent of fresh flowers rode easy on the bright spring air. In front of her, the man who had been with her since the whole amazing story started stood straight as a drill sergeant, his head held proudly aloft, his mouth set firm, his eyes glittering with pride and keen anticipation.

Rio looked so handsome in his white silk suit as he waited at the altar that Jerrica had to clutch at her throat to stop herself from crying out loud. How could he do this to her?

Admittedly, she'd been less than direct with him over the matter of Jem and The Holograms, but why couldn't he see she'd been doing it for his sake? She knew how proud he was, how vulnerable he could be when he tried to hide his emotions, but she'd always thought that what they'd had was special, forever — something beautiful that no one could ever take from them — not even...not even...she wanted to rise, to stand up and say something — anything — but she stayed on her pew as if held there by a gigantic invisible hand.

Then, suddenly, the Wedding March started up, the unseen weight lifted, and Jerrica rose and turned her head slowly to see the beautiful glittering woman who had stolen the love of her heart. Jerrica held her handkerchief tight to her lips as the glowing beauty, as radiant as a dawn rainbow, moved elegantly up the aisle. Her mind fled back to a time not long after her father's funeral, when Rio had held her close to his heart and sworn he would love her for ever...

Then the acrid stench of burning filled Jerrica's nostrils and she realised that the hot tears welling in her eyes were not caused by her dream of heartbreak and loss, but by the all too real tornado of smoke and flame that was at that very moment raging through Starlight House.

"Jerrica!" Shana urged. "Quickly! Wake up,

Jerrica! The house is on fire!"

The dream faded from Jerrica Benton's consciousness like the final chord of a Jem and The Holograms song. She opened her eyes to see Shana's worried face before her.

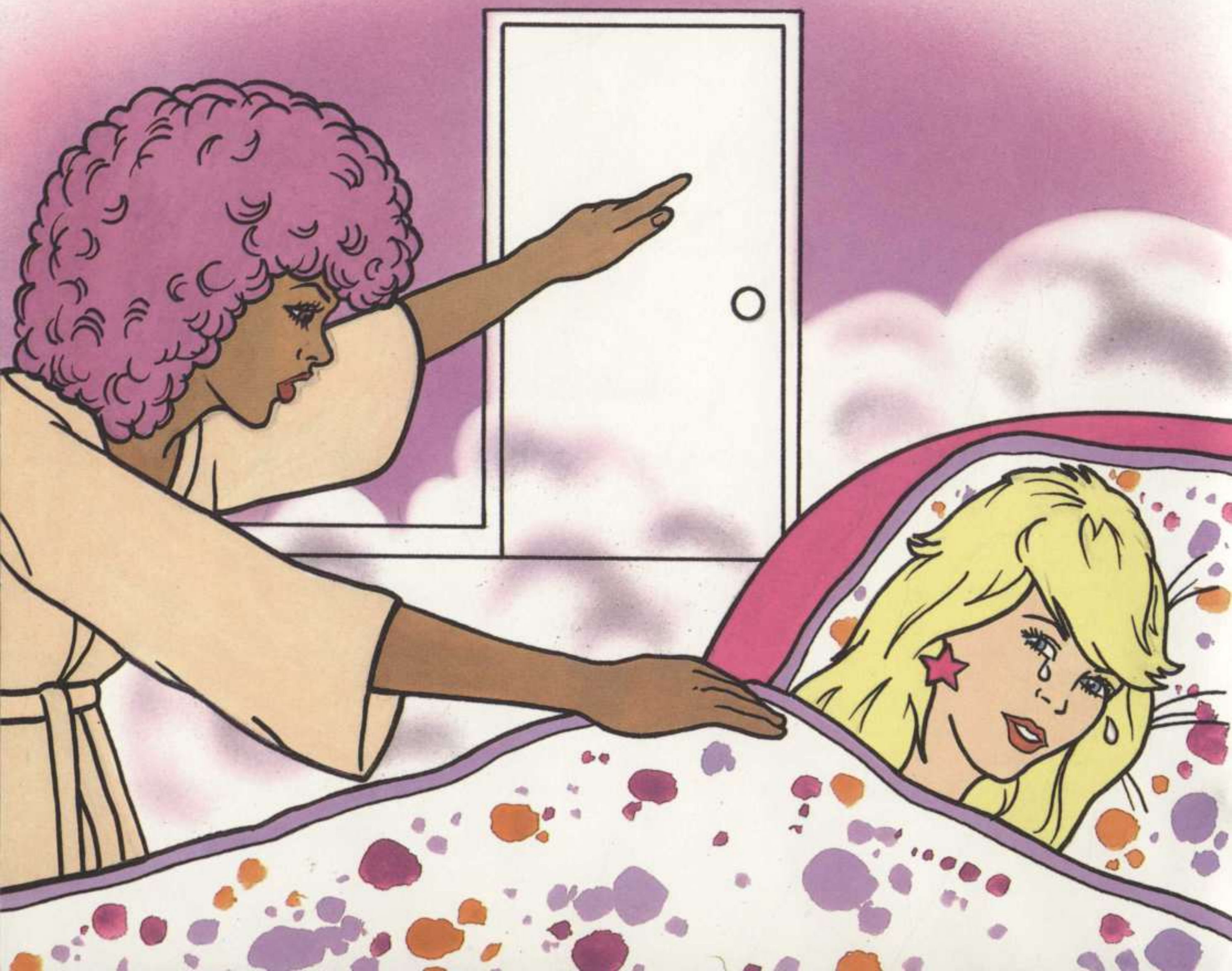
The Holograms' drummer stood by the side of Jerrica's bed, bending over her friend and gently shaking her back into the waking world.

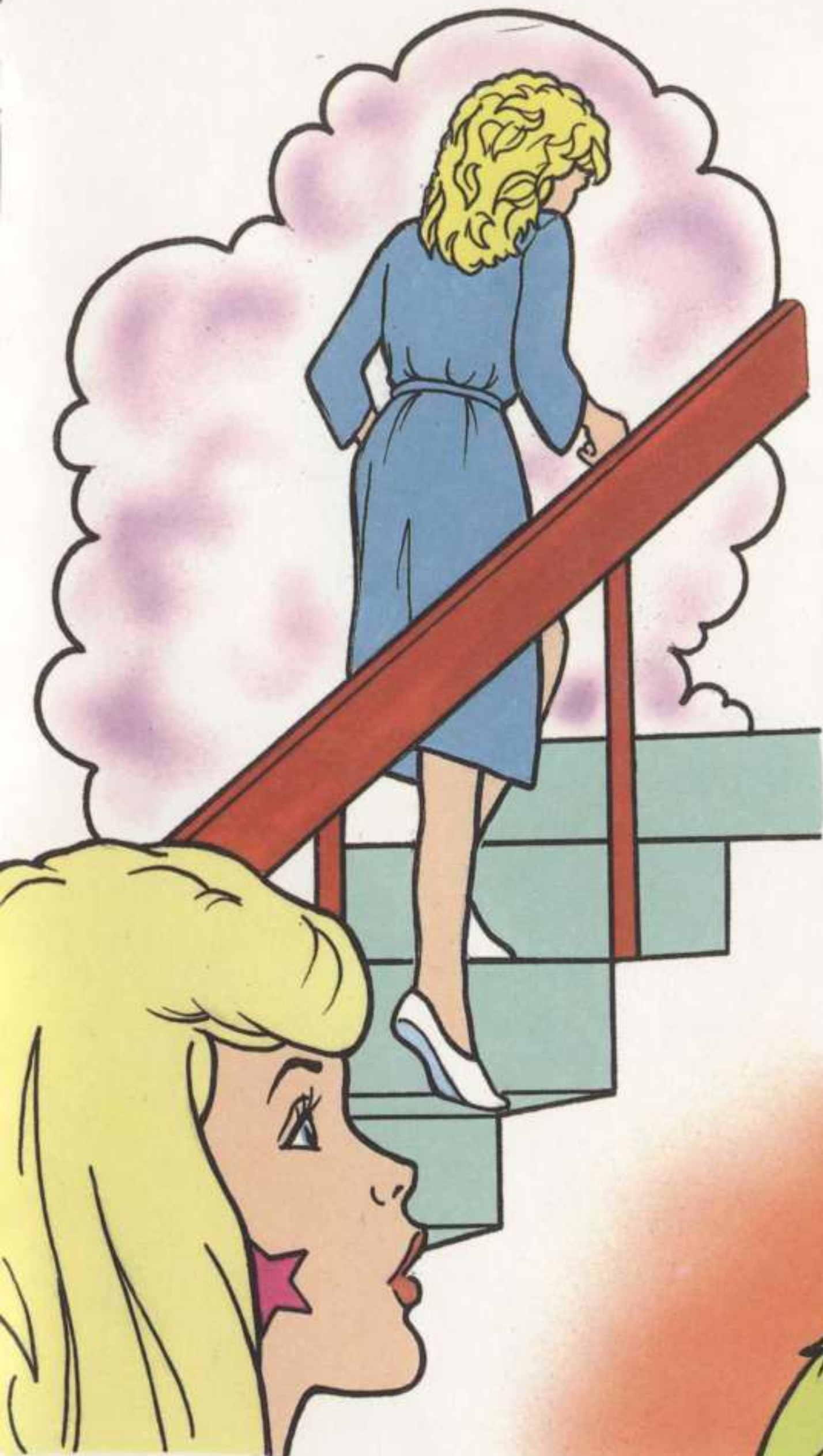
"The children!" Jerrica gasped, immediately taking charge of the proceedings. "Have you woken all the children?" Already, billows of thick white smoke were rolling up the stairs.

"Kimber and Raya are taking care of them," explained Shana. "I've rung for the firemen already but we've got to try and keep damage to a minimum until they get here."

"Of course," said Jerrica, slipping on her dressing gown.

"One of the kids saw an intruder," said





The following morning, Eric Raymond studied the newspaper story of how Starlight House had been saved from ruin as he waited for his phone connection to answer.

"Ah, Zipper," he began, when the ringing tone stopped, "I asked you to steal some backing tapes, not burn the place to the ground."

"Yeah, well, you know how it is — I was unlucky. I was sneaking in through the window when some kid crept down for a glass of milk. I dropped the lantern when I was getting out."

"Well at least no one was hurt. And financially, the cost of rebuilding the place is bound to place a certain fatigue in the cash-flow area. So, all things considered..."

Eric Raymond stopped speaking and covered the mouthpiece of the phone with his hand as the door burst suddenly open and Pizzazz strode in, flanked by Clash, Stormer and Roxy. Pizzazz was carrying a newspaper which she threw down in front of the record company boss.

Shana. "Guess he must've started the fire."

"We'll have to leave that till later," said Jerrica briskly, snatching a fire extinguisher from the wall and playing the hissing jet of foam into the roaring inferno. "The main thing is to make sure everyone's safe."

As Jerrica battled to beat back the blaze, Video raced through all the upstairs rooms until she was satisfied that every single one of the children in the care of Starlight House had escaped. Then she joined Jerrica at the head of the stairs and the two girls stood back to back against the fire, pouring sizzling jets of high pressure foam into the smoke and flames until the distant wailings of the fire engine's sirens grew increasingly louder, and they made their escape through a back bedroom window.



"How come those wimpos are back on the front page again, huh?" demanded Pizzazz, lifting up a paperweight and slamming it down on the desk.

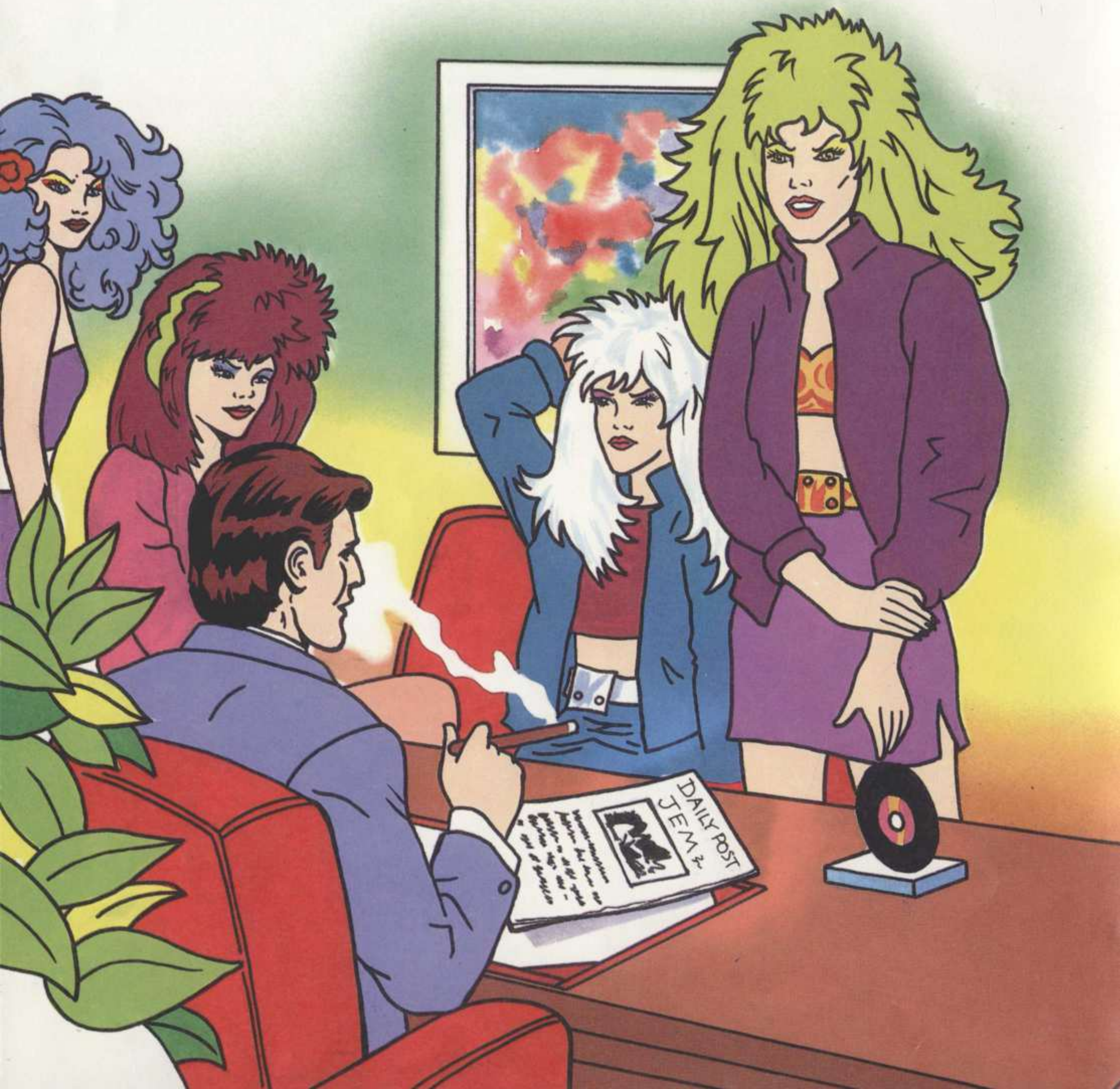
Eric spoke softly into the phone. "Very well, then, sir, I'll be getting back to you when I can." He placed the receiver down and looked up at The Misfits. Pizzazz glared down at him, the muscles in her cheeks twitching aggressively.

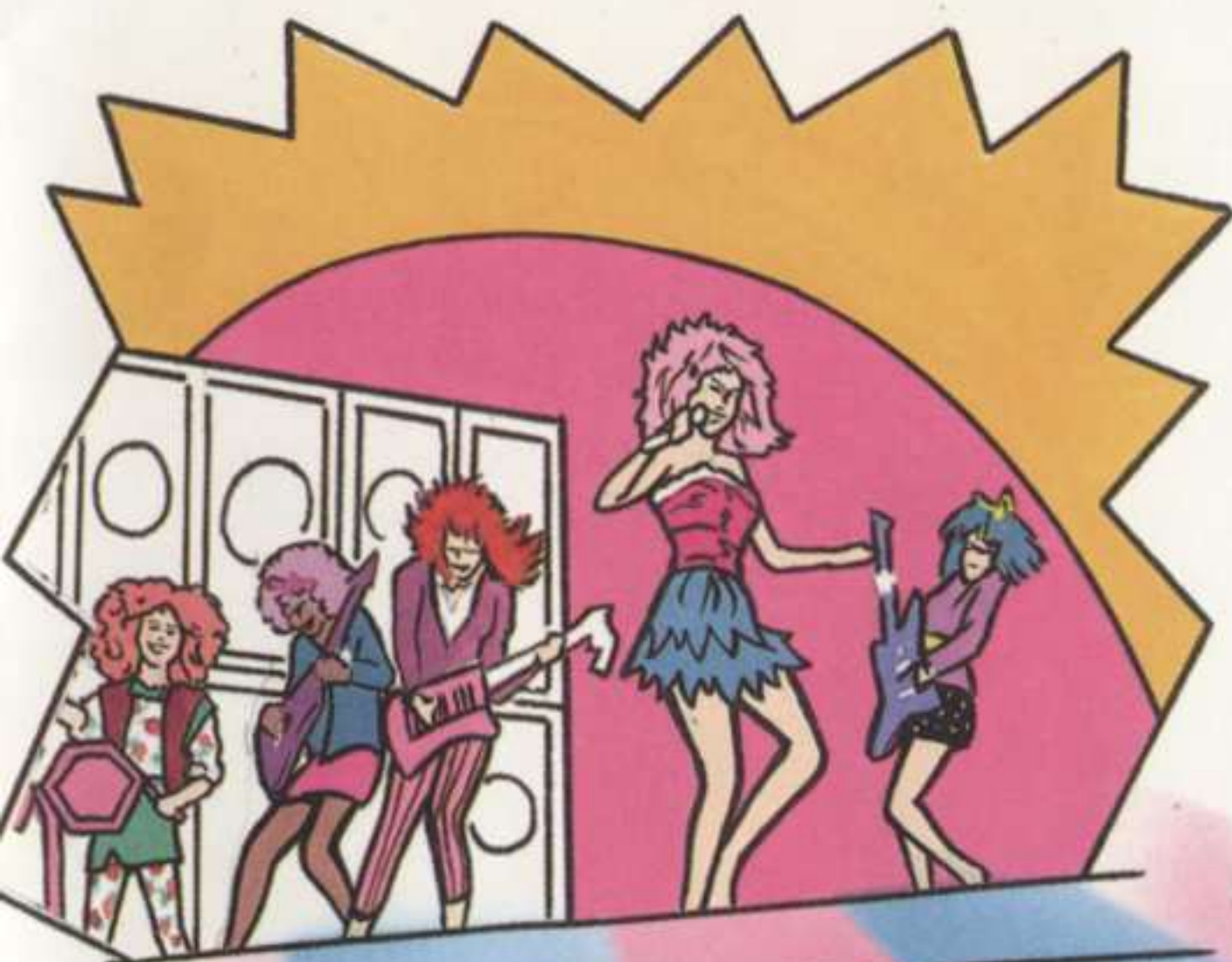
"I don't see why you should be jealous of an accidental fire," Eric began, an insincere smile playing on his lips. Clash picked up a pen and began drawing a skull and crossbones on Eric's blotter.

"The way I remember it," said the no-good girl, "you never see anything at all."

"Too right!" agreed Roxy. "We can play those numbskulls into a cocked hat. It should be us on the front page! We're the boss band round here and we don't take too kindly to playing second fiddle to no-class, no-hope, no-no's!"

"There's no need to get too excited about it all," smiled Eric. "It so happens that I know for a fact that Jem and The Holograms will be staging an open air concert to raise funds to rebuild Starlight House. It's bound to receive maximum media cover."

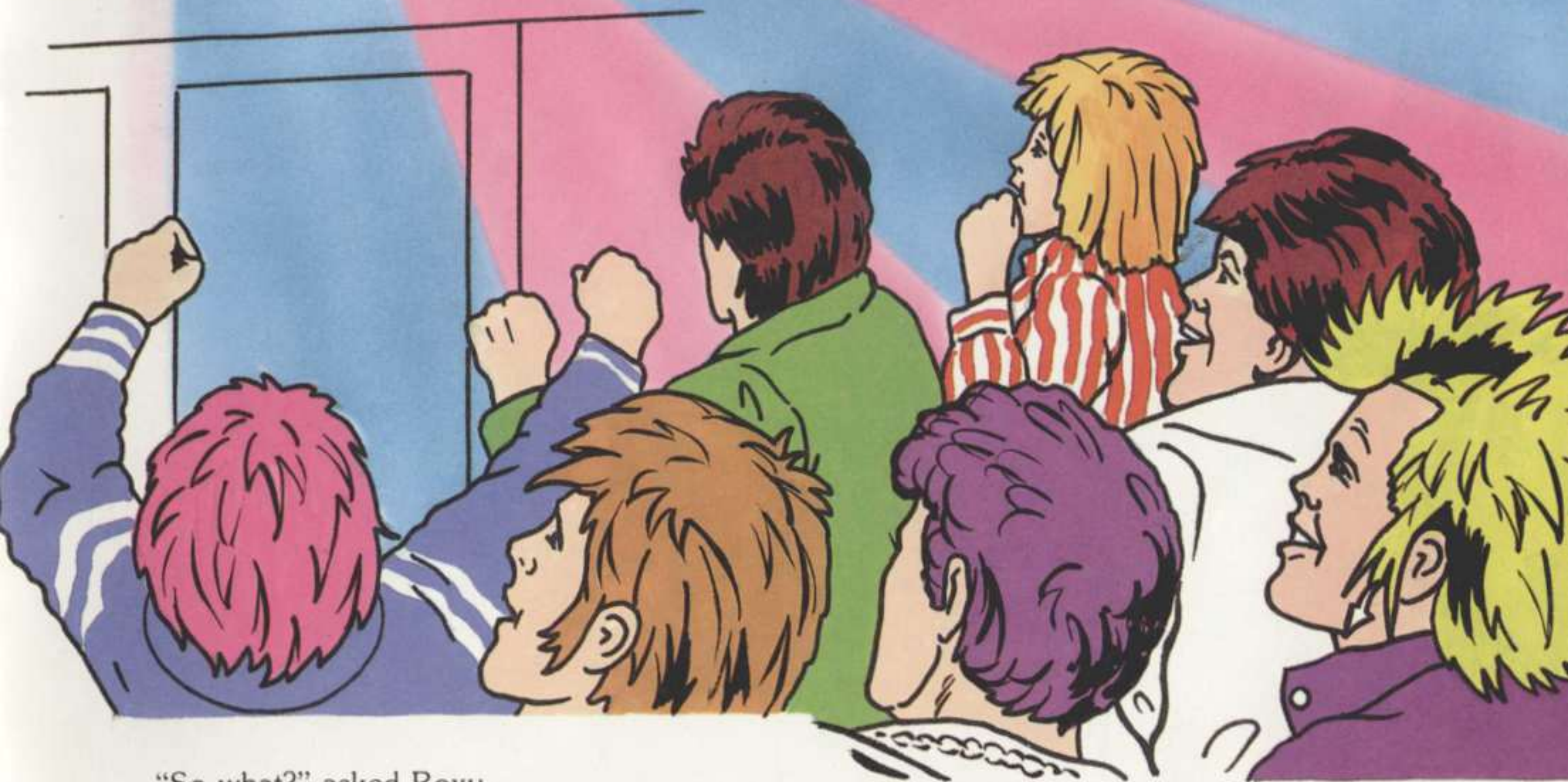




Pizzazz, Clash, Roxy and Stormer exchanged quizzical looks. Then a gleam in Pizzazz's eye caught fire and her face cracked open with mischievous glee.

"All right!" she howled, emphasizing the second word by slapping Eric Raymond's desk top with the flat of her hand. "Let's nail those nimbos!"

The following day, on the roof of the city fire station, Jem's special stage was erected in full view of the thousands and thousands of people who thronged the streets below. A passage had been specially roped off should an emergency



"So what?" asked Roxy.

"Yeah, those wimps won't be inviting us to play," said Stormer.

"They wouldn't have us on their show!" snorted Pizzazz. "They know we'd blow them so far offstage they'd need a passport to get back! We're one act that nobody could follow!"

"That's right!" Clash chipped in. "Those bims are running scared. That Jem's a smart girl to keep hiding away. She wouldn't look so hot if she had to go up against The Misfits!"

"It was just that I thought if all the press and television were going to be there..." Eric Raymond's cold smile widened still further, "wouldn't it be a good idea to find some way of upstaging the famous Jem and her gang?"

call arrive during the concert, and Jem's fans stood respectfully back from it, determined that nothing was going to spoil the show. As the sun slid down over the horizon and lights began winking on all over the town, the first notes of *In The Beginning* ripped through the glowing dusk and suddenly the stage lit up and there in front of thousands of adoring eyes was the hottest group around, the one and only Jem and The Holograms!

Once again, Jem was an absolute revelation, a ballerina one moment, a prowling tiger the next, gliding round the stage as if on wheels of air, singing like a dream and then exploding



into furious dancing action with all the strength and grace of a trained gymnast. The Holograms weighed in with some powerhouse playing, trading spectacular runs off each other and balancing an almost uncanny delicacy of touch with power and passionate feeling.

The crowd went crazy!

As Jem and The Holograms swung into their fourth fantastic number there was a sudden



make of it as Pizzazz, Clash, Stormer and Roxy spat out their lyrics while the balloon drifted gently on the evening breeze. Then a stack of pamphlets thrown by Roxy blew back in the wind, fluttered into the flames of the burner, and within seconds, the balloon was alight, with long yellow fingers of flame reaching up into the night.

The firemen responded brilliantly, and in seconds were directing powerful jets of water at the falling balloon so that the fire was quickly extinguished. The basket of the balloon came to rest in the topmost branches of a tall tree. The Misfits were left helplessly swinging to and fro, waiting to be rescued while Jem and The Holograms restored the power to their stage and went about finishing the show.

They played and sang so well that everyone agreed it was the most truly outrageous night of their lives!

unexplained power cut. Then, completely without warning, a tiny sound, seemingly coming from nowhere, grew louder and louder, a shower of pamphlets rained down from the sky, and there, hovering above Jem's stage in a gigantic hot air balloon, The Misfits appeared playing *Making Mischief*!

The stunned spectators didn't know what to



TWO KINDS OF COURAGE



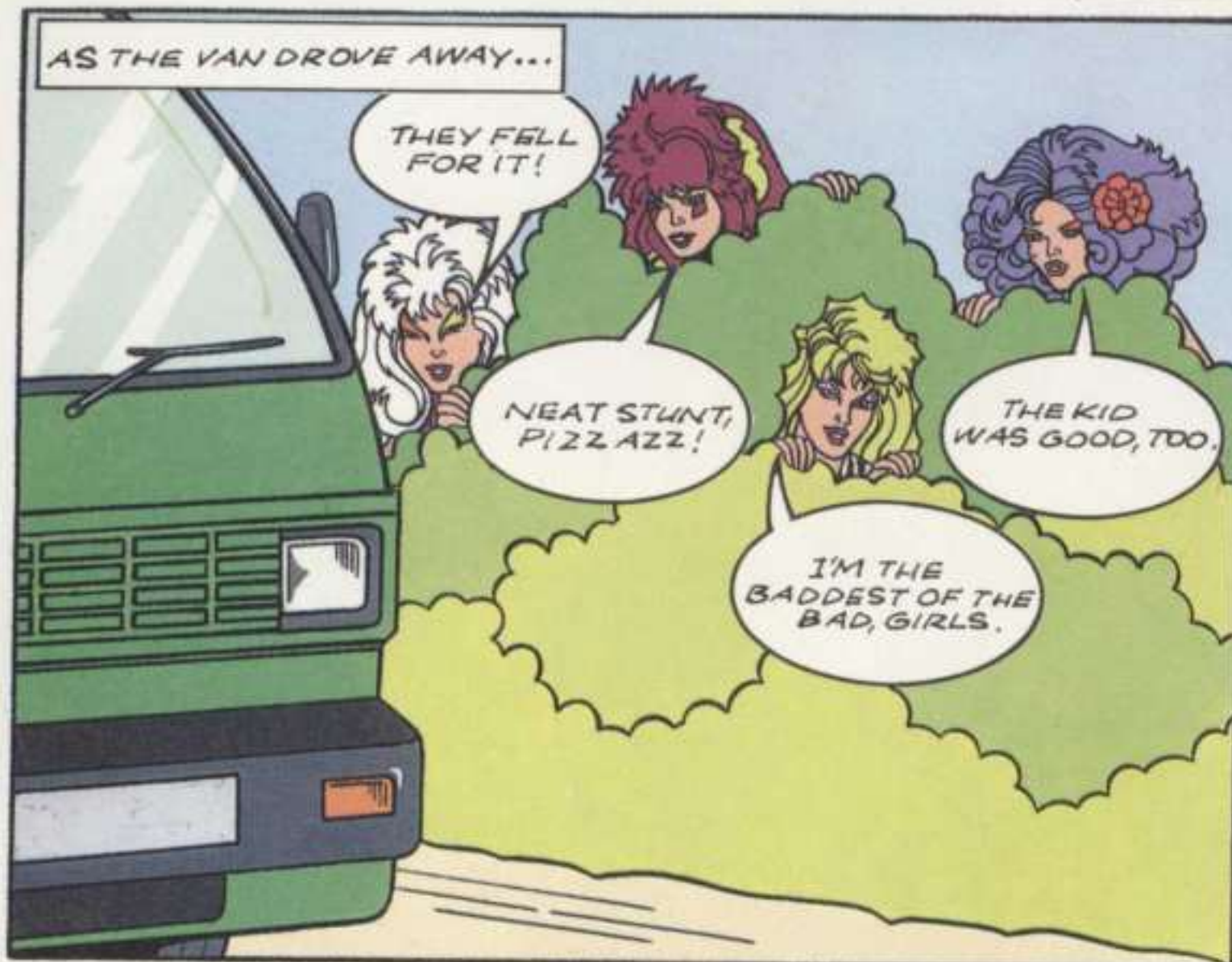


WHERE ARE YOUR PARENTS?

I... I...
HAVEN'T GOT ANY. THEY LEFT ME BY THE SIDE OF THE ROAD AND TOLD ME TO GO AWAY!



THAT'S AWFUL! YOU'LL HAVE TO COME BACK TO STARLIGHT HOUSE WITH US UNTIL WE CAN SORT SOMETHING OUT.



AS THE VAN DROVE AWAY...

THEY FELL FOR IT!

NEAT STUNT, PIZZAZZ!

THE KID WAS GOOD, TOO.

I'M THE BADDEST OF THE BAD, GIRLS.

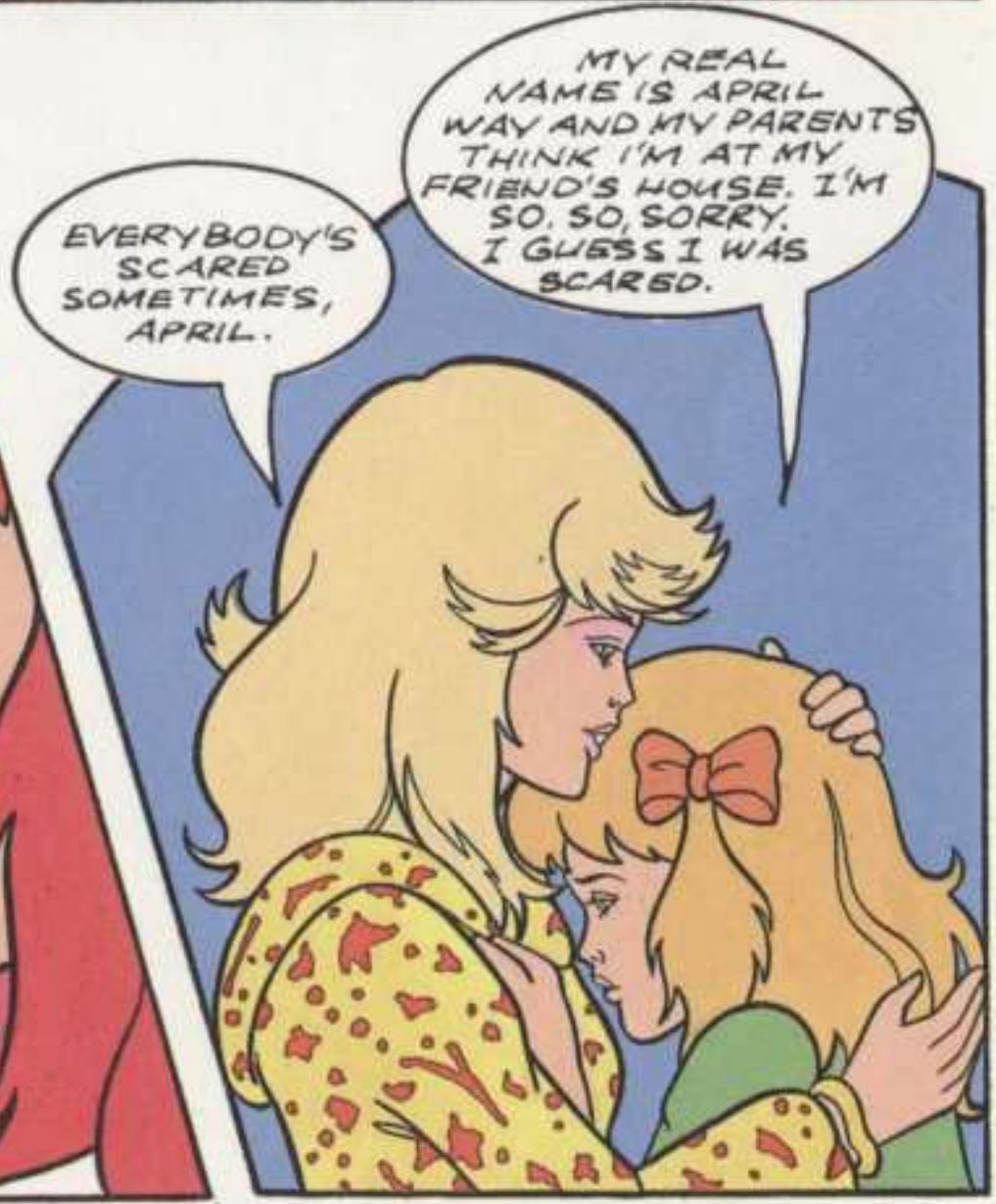


AND NOW THOSE NO-HOPERS ARE GOING TO LEARN ONCE AND FOR ALL...



YOU DON'T MESS WITH THE MISFITS!!!







GOLD GETS GOING



Jerrica Benton's eyes seemed vaguely puzzled as she worked her way through the departure lounge at L.A.X. Airport in an effort to find out what had unleashed the sudden, up-beat buzz of excitement that was seething through the crowd outside. When she did finally discover the source of the amazed chattering and outrageous laughter, she stood spellbound.

"Rio!" she called over the heads of the happy, clamouring fans.

But Jerrica's cry went unheard, as Rio waved to the chanting crowd from behind the wheel of the fantastic new Rockin' Roadster. The car was a shiny, sleek masterpiece of design, complete with gold hubcaps and trims. Rio himself had never looked more magnificent, resplendent in his stylish gold outfit. Jerrica's cry of, "The car looks magic and so do you, Rio," was lost among the

thousands of admiring gasps and squeals.

"What a crowd," Jerrica murmured to herself. "I'll never get through to see Rio. Unless..." Making sure that no one was looking at her, Jerrica casually touched one of her red earrings and whispered, "It's show time, Synergy. Glitter and Gold hologram of Jem on the airport roof."

Then the opening chords of *Depends On The Mood I'm In* rang out. There was a collective cooing of astonishment, and the crowd's heads turned as one to see the sparkling figure of Jem, standing alone on her portable stage set on the airport roof, dancing like magic and singing sweeter than honey.

"Jem! Jem! Jem!" howled the crowd, rushing to get a better look as Jem swayed with the beat.

Abruptly beached by the swirling tide of

humanity, Jerrica seemed, for a brief, fleeting instant, suddenly lost, confused, and alone. Then Rio took her hands in his and she found her heartbeat once again thumping to the rhythm of love.

"Since Jem's gone gold, I thought she'd need some suitable form of transport for the video," said Rio. "Eric Raymond tried to stall me over the money, but the customizer's a great fan. Video and Danse think it will be just the thing for the jungle scenes, Raya's keen, and Kimber, Shana and Aja, too!"

"I'm sure Jem will think it's great," agreed Jerrica, slipping into the Rockin' Roadster, as Rio held the door for her. "She wanted to do the solo spot so the rest of us could board the plane without trouble. I've already arranged for her to make her way to the set later."

Rio drove the Rockin' Roadster straight into the cargo bay of the plane they had chartered. All six Holograms were waiting happily inside

the passenger suite. Despite all their fantastic, spectacular success, they were as fresh and animated as a group of long-time friends starting out on the first day at a new school.

"You really sold us up the river with this one, Video," joked Aja. Video joined in the laughter.

"Come on, you guys, admit it," she replied, good-naturedly. "If we can pull this off right it will be really something!"

"Jem and The Holograms going up the Amazon to find the Lost City of Gold..." mused Shana, her eyes twinkling as the plane's engines started up. "I don't know what it will be, but you can bet your last luncheon voucher it will be something, all right!"

"The natives are so eager to do it they insisted on building the set for the Lost City themselves," enthused Raya, caught up in the rush of excitement.

"It's truly, truly, truly outrageous!" Kimber





agreed gleefully, carefully fastening her seat-belt as the plane taxied onto the runway. "And we've worked it so we can do *Love Is Here* on the quest, and finish off with *Glitter 'n' Gold* in the Lost City!"

"It's solid gold, guys," Danse chipped in, "and with the moves I've got planned, we'll get the whole of the jungle into the groove!"

And as The Holograms chattered happily on, and the plane soared upwards into the night, Jerrica tried to hide her strange feelings of unease as she gazed at the handsome, thoughtful face of Rio.

Two days later, with the shooting of the Jem and The Holograms video well under way, Pizzazz, Clash, Roxy and Stormer were heading downriver towards the set with mischief in mind. Pizzazz and Roxy were in the lead canoe, while Clash and Stormer followed close behind.

"This place is really spooky!" commented Stormer nervously, eyeing the dense foliage that lined both banks. "I mean, maybe we should have got a guide or something." A rustling in the undergrowth made her grip her paddle still more tightly. A flock of brightly plumed birds exploded skywards, screeching and calling as they fled some unseen predator. Stormer coughed nervously. Roxy stared straight ahead. From its vantage point high in a tree, a jaguar idly watched them pass as Pizzazz and Clash paddled resolutely onwards. "I mean," Stormer persisted, trying to keep the fear she felt from showing, "this whole thing is just wild!"

"So are we, kid!" Pizzazz called back. "Wild and free, like the wind and the sea. We're no namby-pamby noodles like Miss High and Mighty Jam and her precious little Marshmallowgrams."

Clash quickly joined in the attempted belittling of the world's most truly outrageous band. "These girls are yesterday's news," she insisted. "After we show up on their video taking the hubcaps off their Rockin' Roadster we'll be shooting off into the wild blue yonder of fame. And once we get there, we'll go higher and higher until we reach orbit!"

"You said it, sister!" Roxy agreed. "They've had their chance. It's our turn now and we're going to..."

A sudden noisy splash made them all turn. Even Pizzazz gulped when she saw the giant anaconda wriggling through the water towards them, its smooth, shiny body as thick as a grown man's thigh.

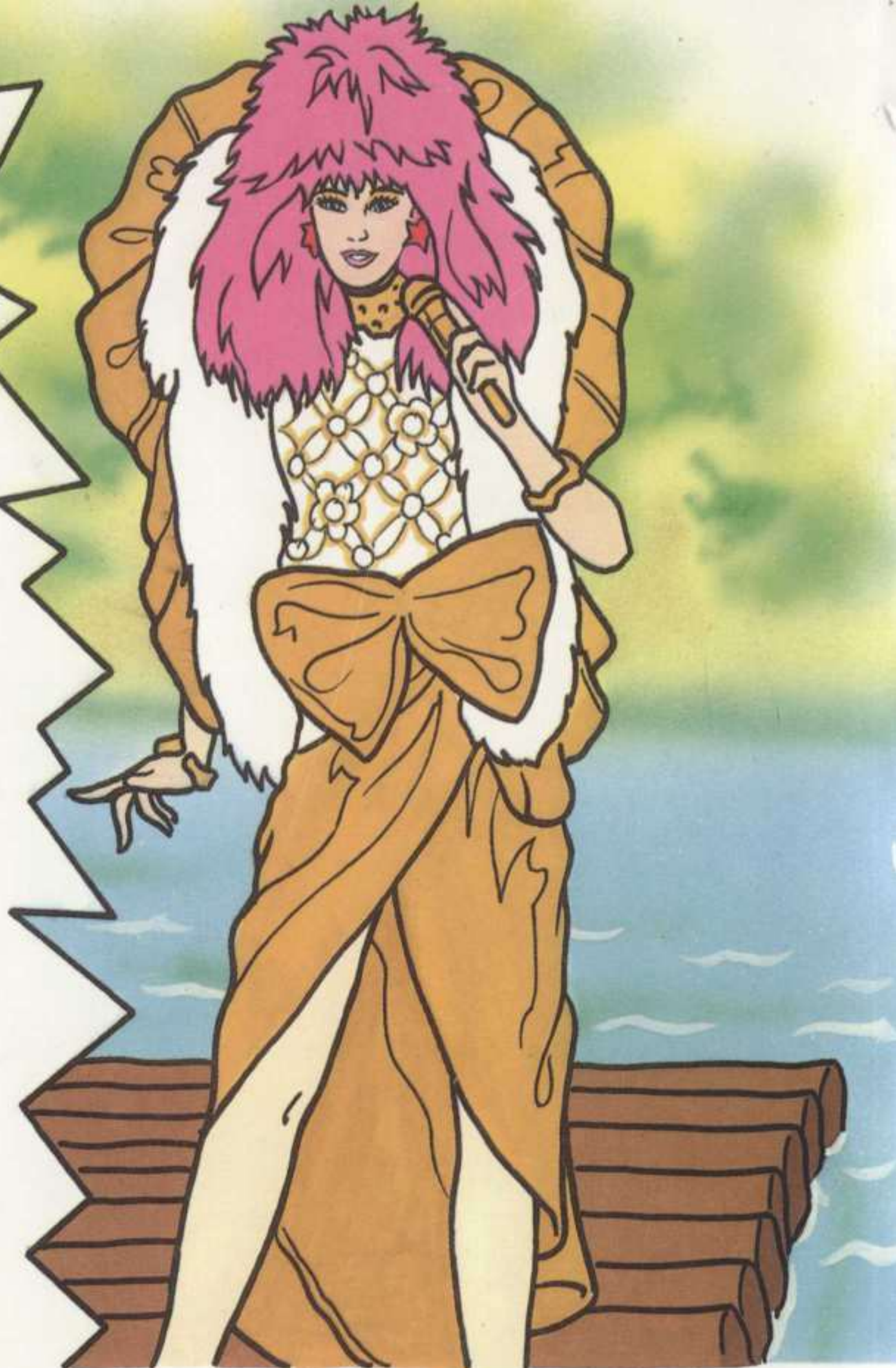
Then she saw that the other Misfits were even more scared, so she handed Roxy her guitar and launched herself unaccompanied into the blistering, scorching vocals of *I Am A Giant*. Clash quickly took heart and joined in, followed by Roxy and Stormer, and soon the canoes were rocking to The Misfits' driving beat. The snake slowed down and drifted alongside them for a while, but when Pizzazz

led the girls into *Outta My Way!*, the huge reptile seemed to lose interest and turned away, looping slowly round on itself and heading for shore. The Misfits' sound grew louder and harder as the snake swam to the bank, and by the time the giant noisily slithered up the mud and into the forest, The Misfits' storming vocals and electrifying playing had gained a triumphant, exhilarating edge.

"The whole world's going to know soon," cried Pizzazz, lifting her paddle high as the song ended. "It doesn't pay to play around with the Queen of modern sound."

Further downriver, the day's shooting had been going well, and with only two shots left for the day, Video had finally relented and given the group a short break. The delighted natives had been only too willing to try out the new routines Danse had worked out, and the tribe's musicians were busily swapping rhythms with Raya. Kimber, Shana and Aja were performing some intricate vocal harmonies for the benefit of a large group of grinning girls, and Rio proudly showed off his jacket to some young men, who fingered the gold material with





undisguised joy. As usual, Jem was surrounded by a host of eager admirers, and she took the time out to have a special word with each and every one. Then Video checked her light meter and suddenly the break was over.

"You know what we want for this scene," she explained, as the natives moved out of shot. "Rio drives the Rockin' Roadster along this trail, while Jem drifts down the river behind him on the raft. As soon as the chorus comes in, the rest of The Holograms suddenly drop down from these trees and pull the raft in. Clear?"

"Clear, boss," chorused Jem and The Holograms. The natives watched with smiling faces while Jem took her place on the raft and Rio climbed behind the shiny gold wheel of the Rockin' Roadster. Then the music came on, Rio hit the starter, Jem cut the raft free, and the action began.

As soon as they heard the music up ahead, The Misfits drew into the bank.

"Get that gizmo of yours to work, Clash," snapped Pizzazz, as they moved along the trail. "Let's see if we can't mess up their music for a while, before we steal the hubcaps and the show!"

Clash activated her distortion modulator before Jem and The Holograms were in sight, and immediately the recorded sound track began to flicker and fade, then rise again while gaining speed. Sticking to his instructions, Rio kept driving straight onwards, while behind him, the watching natives were treated to an amazing sight.

The fantastic hip-swaying figure of Jem on the raft began to change, as the distortion modulator began to interfere with her holographic signals. One minute the amazed natives were watching the incredible, outrageous Jem and then she seemed to phase

into the altogether different character of Jerrica Benton. Then, when the transformation was almost complete, Jem would suddenly and inexplicably return in all her glory, only to start fading again almost at once. It was the most incredible piece of technological wizardry they had ever seen, and as far as they knew, it was all part of the stupendously spectacular and truly outrageous act.

Then Clash caught sight of the giant fury spider that had dropped onto her shoulder, and she dived headlong through the undergrowth to try and shake it off. Her foot caught on a tangled tree root, the spider went flying, and she stumbled head first into the mighty Amazon. As she waded to shore, the unique power source of her distortion modulator began to overload, and when the amazing invention began to hum and smoke,

Clash shut it down altogether. Further upriver the immaculate holographic image of Jem was restored to normality once more.

After The Misfits had been rounded up and ferried to the nearest town and the scene had been re-shot, Rio and Jem sat side by side in the Rockin' Roadster, as the rest of The Holograms made supper for the natives.

"It was very kind of you to find me this wonderful vehicle," smiled Jem. Rio smiled back.

"It took some fast talking, I'll admit that," he explained, "but you've got to move fast to stay ahead of Eric Raymond and his bunch of nasties. I bet Jerrica will have a good laugh when she hears how another Misfit scheme went wrong."

"I'm sure she will," agreed Jem. And she couldn't help laughing!



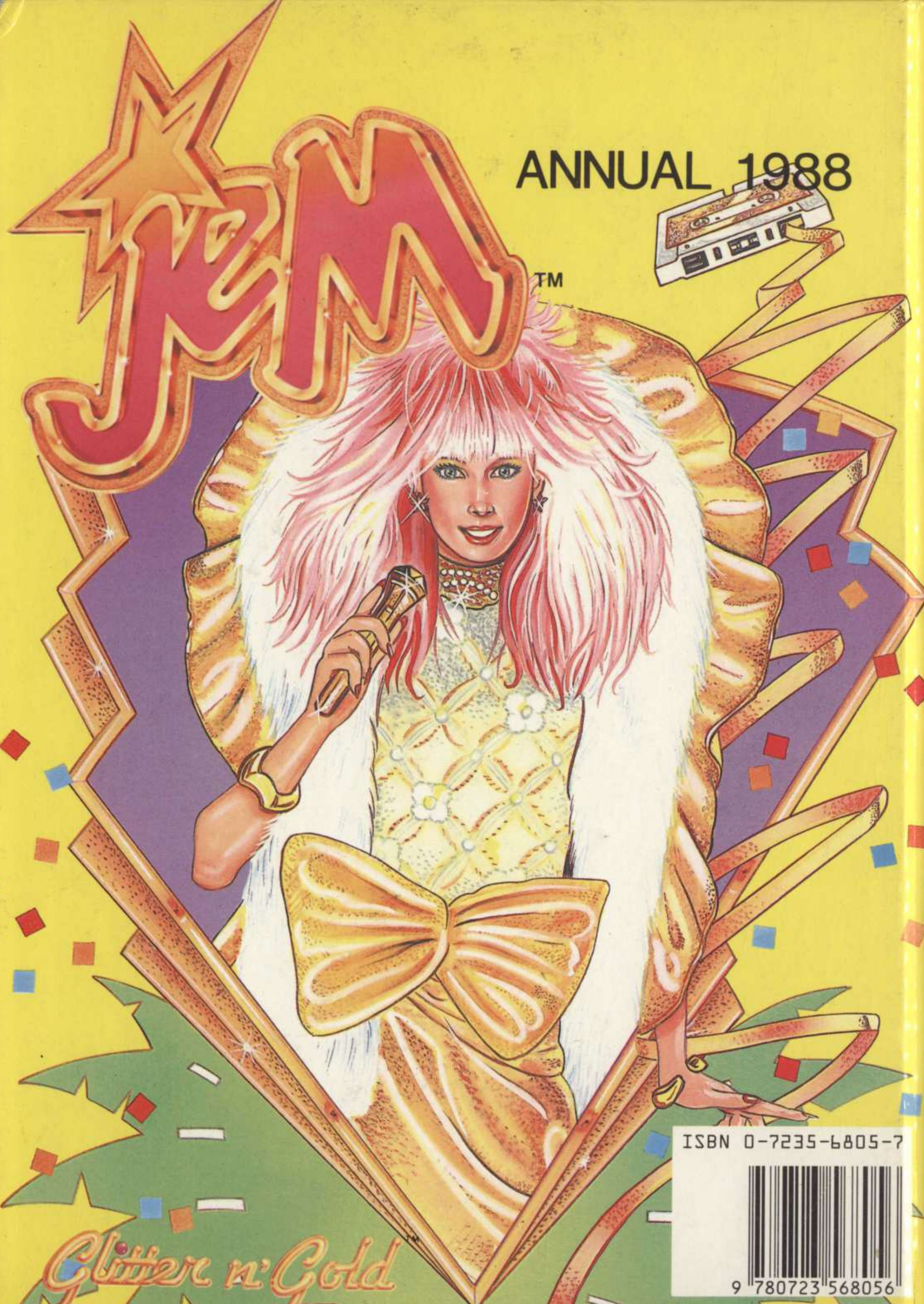




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